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THE

LIFE

OF

TITIAN:

WITH ANECDOTES OF

THE DISTINGUISHED PERSONS OF HIS TIME.

BY JAMES NORTHCOTE, ESQ. R.A.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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THE

LIFE OF TITIAN.

CHAPTER I.

HIS BIRTH—EDUCATION UNDER THE BELLINI—OBLIGATIONS TO GIORGIONE—HIS FIRST PRODUCTIONS.

It is to be lamented that the long period of time which has elapsed since the admiring world saw the genius of Titian appear, has obliterated too many interesting particulars in the life of a man so eminently endowed by nature and so favoured by fortune; which, had they been preserved, would doubtless have gratified curiosity, and have conveyed useful instruction to future generations. Indeed, the precise time of his birth is left in uncertainty. De Piles, in his Chronological Tables, and the authors of the *Abrégé des*

Vies des Peintres, fix it in 1477, and make him ninety-nine at his death; but as Giorgione was confessedly older than Titian, and was born in 1478, I have preferred the joint authorities of Vasari and Sandrart, who affirm that Titian was born in 1480, at Capo del Cadore, a small town on the borders of the river Pieve, about five miles from the Alps and dependent on Cadore, on the confines of Friuli, under the Venetian government. His parents were called Vecelli; of an honourable family, to which belonged St Titian, Bishop of Odezza, from whom, no doubt, our artist derived his name. He was sent, when a child of nine or ten years old, to Venice, to be placed in the house and under the care of his father's brother, who was possessed of one of those lucrative offices which were always given to citizens of eminence.

The father of Titian, having perceived in his son, even at a tender age, strong marks of a quick and ingenious mind and a particular bias towards the arts (for surely Nature designed him for a painter) was induced to take this step with a view to forward his studies in drawing; and his uncle directly carried the child to the house of Sebastian Zuccati of Treviso (father of the elegant Valerio) and his brother Francis, to be instructed by them in

the principles of the art; for these two were the only masters in mosaic-work, and had brought it to the utmost degree of perfection. From thence he was soon after removed to the tuition of Gentile Bellino (brother of John, but much inferior to him) who was at that time at work with his brother in the great council-chamber in the palace of St Mark. But Titian, urged on by the bent of his genius to greater excellence in the art, could not endure to follow the dry and laboured manner of Gentile, but designed with boldness and expedition. The latter, on seeing this, told him he would make no progress in painting, because he forsook his manner. Titian upon this left the ignorant Gentile, and applied to his brother John, who was very famous in his art. Under the guidance of this new master, Titian attended closely to design, and soon showed both his genius and judgment by the rapid progress he made in the acquirements necessary to become a painter. Still he was not perfectly satisfied with Bellino's manner, and felt within himself that infinitely more might be done in the art, than any thing he had hitherto seen: for in that early period neither John Bellino nor any of his contemporaries had the least knowledge of the works of the ancients, but always copied ex-

actly the individual model in nature which happened at the moment to be before them, with all its accidental imperfections; and even this was done in a hard, dry manner, without the slightest approach to taste or elegance; and Titian's first productions partook strongly of this character. However, such a beginning did no hurt to a genius like Titian's; as his education under Sebastian Zuccati and John Bellino rendered him a diligent and subtle observer of every thing which strikes the senses; so that when at a maturer age he entered into a competition in high-finishing with Albert Durer, and painted at Ferrara the picture of "Christ with the Tribute Money," (now at Dresden) he excelled in pencilling even that great master of minuteness: with this one difference of result, that although the hairs on the head and eyebrows of his figures might be counted, and though every pore was discriminated, and the objects reflected in the pupils of the eyes, the effect of the whole was not diminished, but seemed to gain more breadth and grandeur by distance. But to that work he made no companion. This mode of study is, I am convinced, the best that can be adopted by learners, as it gives them so completely a knowledge of the parts, that as their practice increases, they are enabled to

add more freedom to their execution, without departing from the true and essential character, well knowing how to leave out what is trivial: as that man will walk most firmly who is best acquainted with the ground he treads upon.

Titian, when young, is said to have engraved both on copper and on wood. This was probably in his leisure-hours, and before he became so well known as to be better employed. There is a long frieze of eight or ten prints by him, dated 1505: but it does not appear to have been published till 1508. It represents the "Triumph of Faith," by a procession, composed of an almost infinite number of figures, among which are our first parents, the patriarchs, the prophets, the sybils, the saints, the innocents, the martyrs, the apostles, and our Saviour in full triumph, supported by the four evangelists and the doctors of the church, followed by a train of the holy confessors. This work raised the credit of Titian, as it evinced his power of composition, his judgment, and his great advance of practice.

The other plates attributed to him are several large landscapes from his own designs, which are etched on copper in a slight but masterly manner, among which is one of a shepherd leading his flock to the brook, and

playing on his pipe.* Of his wood cuts, the following are considered the most authentic:

"The Marriage of St Catherine," inscribed, *Titianus Vecellinus inventor delineavit.*

"Samson and Dalilah" (no mark).

Algarotti's opinion of another of these is as follows: "As to the satirical print or rather pasquinade of the *Great Titian* (as he styles him) in which he represented a parcel of young monkies aping the group of the Laocoon and his sons, he intended nothing more by it than to lash the dulness and poverty of those artists who cannot so much as draw a figure without having a statue before them as a model."

It is very uncertain if all the etchings on wood ascribed to Titian were actually engraved by him. The designs are undoubtedly his, and drawn for the express purpose of being engraved on wood; but the mechanical part was perhaps undertaken by his nephew, who was a professed engraver; as may be seen by a book of dresses, which are all designed by Titian, but engraved by his nephew.

There is also a set of anatomical figures, said to be drawn by Titian with the help and in-

* This Rubens has imitated in a fine landscape at Dulwich College.

struction of his intimate friend Vesalius, the greatest anatomist of that time.

In the year 1504, there happened in Venice a most terrible fire, which entirely consumed the Fondaco di Tedeschi, or German-office, with all the property in it, to the incalculable loss of the merchants. This building was situated just at the foot of the Rialto, and the Senate gave immediate orders to have it rebuilt in a more magnificent style, and one more convenient for the inmates, and also that it should be highly ornamented. When this beautiful edifice was finished, Giorgione of Castel-Franco, whose fame at that time was fast increasing, was consulted as to the ornamental part; and it was accordingly entrusted to his care on his return to Venice in 1507. —When this aspiring genius first saw the dry and tasteless mode of execution of the Venetian painters, he was not much more satisfied with it than Titian had been; and soon began to give his works more breadth and softness and a greater degree of relief, with a freer touch. However, he still only aimed at a finer imitation of the model before him, either living or inanimate, and distinguishing, to the best of his power, the texture of the surface in the things he represented; and this he did at once with

colours on the canvas, without ever making any previous arrangement in outline, being of opinion that a masterly representation of the object before him was all that was required to produce a good picture. He had no idea of the necessity of making a sketch of the whole composition, or studies of particular parts; nor was he aware of the great advantage to be gained by making a variety of essays in different dispositions on paper, to see how the whole would accord when put together. It is impossible for the mind of itself to form a conception of the effect of a whole, till it is in some manner presented to the eye, in order to enable us to decide with clearness and certainty on its propriety. Neither did any of the Venetian artists of that period understand the importance of a thorough knowledge of anatomy, so as to qualify them to trace the parts with distinctness in the model before them, and to express them with accuracy in their outward appearance. For those who are well prepared by learning and study, work with greater freedom and dispatch, as well as effect; and both their style and execution become more perfect, and without that labour, slowness, and uncertainty, which are manifest in the works of the ignorant and inexperienced. Besides, it becomes a

painful drudgery to require a model, either draped or naked, to be perpetually before us; and by making a previous sketch and by a thorough inquisition into the component parts, the mind is relieved of the perplexity occasioned by ignorance of the principles of the art, which was too common in the Venetian school of painting. Pordenone and others of his countrymen had never seen Rome nor any of those works of deep study, which are to be found there. Giorgione, who was also bred up at Venice, had never visited Rome, yet had the merit of being the first that took up the modern Tuscan manner; for having by chance met with some works of Leonardo da Vinci, which exhibited a new and striking effect of strong shadows, they pleased him so much, that he followed the same method all his life after, and succeeded in it perfectly in all his oil-paintings. He drew after the life, and had an excellent eye for colour, and gave a spirit to all he did, which had not been seen in any Lombard painter before him. Leonardo da Vinci and Fra Bartolomeo were both Florentines. The former was a most excellent colourist, and the discoverer of that fine manner of relievo and effect of light and shade, which was afterwards carried to that high degree of perfection which distin-

guishes the Venetian school. Fra Bartolomeo's colouring is very little inferior to that of Titian himself. Da Vinci, however, had the merit of inventing the new method, and pointing out the errors of his predecessors, by setting an example of the opposite excellences : for besides strength and manliness of design, he gave his works all the subtle detail and exactness of nature, yet with sound rules, good arrangement, true proportion, and fine expression. This great example (though at some distance) Giorgione followed; and in certain respects surpassed.

As soon as young Titian saw this splendid effect in the works of Giorgione, he instantly quitted the manner of John Bellino, which he had hitherto pursued; and made himself so effectually a master of the new practice, that it became difficult to distinguish his works from those of Giorgione.

Titian, advancing in years, in practice, and in judgment, was soon employed to execute a great many works in fresco in different places, which it is now impossible to ascertain: it is enough to say that judges saw sufficient merit in them to foretel his future eminence; and yet, at the time we speak of, he was only eighteen years of age.

At this period he painted the portrait of a

gentleman who was his friend, and head of the noble family of the Barberigi, which gained him universal admiration, being deemed extraordinarily fine in respect to likeness, colour, and careful finishing; and Vasari speaks of it with particular commendation, by saying that the hair was so well imitated, that you might count each single hair on the head. This appears to me injudicious praise, as I should think it could not be like real hair. It was also admired for the rich drapery or doublet of satin embroidered with silver. It is said this portrait might very well have passed for the work of Giorgione, had not Titian written his name in the dark corner of the picture: for he had now acquired that freer and less anxious manner adopted by Giorgione, who was first his fellow-student and afterwards his rival. Sebastian Zuccati and the Bellini, his first masters, under whom he had adhered to a servile and laboured imitation of nature, were now regarded by him with contempt; but let it be remembered, that it was not until he had seen the works of Giorgione, that he relinquished the tame and spiritless style which characterized his earlier productions, and was enabled to become the founder of a new school of art.

I will in this place venture to give my opi-

nion, that there is no way so improving to a student, as to finish his pictures to the utmost minuteness in his power; by which means he will acquire a thorough knowledge of the exact forms and character of the parts. If he has a genius for the art, he will soon discover what he may treat slightly or leave out of his work; and if he has none, he will be enabled, by this method, to give such an air of truth to his productions as will pass for merit with a large part of the community, by which he will be secure of employment, and will also have a certain claim to respect. But a careless, and what is often supposed to be a bold manner, when practised by the ignorant, is detestable, and shows a kind of unfeeling assurance, as if the artist said, "Anything is good enough for the public!"

Giorgione having been commissioned to paint that front of the new building of the Fondaco di Tedeschi, which is towards the Grand Canal, Titian, by the interest of his friend, Signor Barberigo, was employed to paint some subjects on the front which is towards the Merceria. In this work he painted a Judith so admirably, both as to design and colouring, that on its being presented to public view it was generally thought to be the work of Gior-

gione, insomuch that one day some gentlemen of Venice meeting with the latter artist, and not knowing that any one but himself was engaged in that undertaking, gave him joy of his great success, particularly on that side towards the Merceria, and told him that he had outdone his performance on the side which was towards the Grand Canal. Giorgione, with shame and regret, replied, that "It was not his, but his master's;" and, in fact, was so mortified, that before the work was completed, he shut himself up in his house for several days, and from that time forward renounced all friendship with Titian, but yet gave him high praise, saying that "he was a painter from his mother's womb."

His next work was a composition undertaken by desire of Signor Andrea Loredano, at St Marcula, in Venice. In this picture he painted the Flight of the Virgin into Egypt: the background represents a wood, which is wonderfully fine, with a distant landscape. He has also introduced animals, which were all taken from nature, and most exquisitely painted. For this work Titian had prepared himself by devoting several months in the country to the study of landscape alone. He also kept three Flemish landscape-painters in his house. These were

John Calcar, Deterie Brandt, and Lambert Zuotris, who excelled in their profession, but unfortunately all died young.

After this he painted a portrait, of the size of life, of his godfather, Signor Giovanni D'Anna, a rich German merchant. Next, he made a picture of an *Ecce Homo*, in which he introduced a multitude of figures. He himself is said to have been much pleased with it; and it was highly extolled by all who saw it. He also painted a Madonna and angels, accompanied by several other figures, of the full size of nature, and studied from living models.

The diligence with which he pursued his studies is sufficiently evident from his success. Statesmen and warriors may grow great from unexpected accidents, and from a fortunate concurrence of circumstances, neither procured nor foreseen by themselves; but reputation in the fine arts or the learned world must be the effect of industry and capacity. Titian never lost an hour—always endeavouring to add excellence to excellence. His works were various and exact, profound and agreeable; and indeed Vasari says, that once, in conversation with Padre Bastiano del Piombo, he remembers his saying, when speaking of Titian, that " had he been at Rome and seen the works of Michael Angelo, those of

Raphael, and the antique statues, and had attended more to correct drawing and proportion, he would have produced miraculous works, seeing the practice he had in colouring, and his being undoubtedly the most faultless imitator of nature of his time. Could he but have acquired correctness of outline, the world would then have seen a perfect painter."

CHAPTER II.

FARTHER ACCOUNT OF HIS WORKS—DEATH OF GIORGIONE AND OF JOHN BELLINO.

TITIAN's next work was at Vicenza, where he was invited to paint in fresco the gallery of the Court of Justice in that city. In it he introduced the Judgment of Solomon, which was much esteemed. When he returned to Venice, he was employed to ornament the front of the Grimani palace. He then went to Padua, where he painted also in fresco, in the church of St Antony, several miracles imputed to that saint. He also completed, in the church of Spirito Santo, a small picture in oil of St Mark, seated in discourse with other saints, in which he has introduced portraits from nature, finished with great diligence and care; and in truth this was taken by some for the work of Giorgione.

It was at this time (1511) that the Venetians had to lament the loss of Giorgione, who died

of the plague (which he caught from his mistress) in the thirty-fourth year of his age. On his death, Titian succeeded him in several important commissions, in which he had been engaged.

Giorgione, whose real name was Giorgio Barbarelli, was born at Castel-Franco, in the Trevisan, in the year 1478, when Giovanni Mocenigo was Doge of Venice; and from the nobleness of his person, and the greatness of his abilities, he acquired the surname of Giorgione. He was brought up in Venice, and first applied himself to music; for which he had so great a talent, and became so famous for playing on the lute and singing, that he was invited to all concerts and public music-meetings. Afterwards, he devoted his time to the art of design, in which nature gave him great facility; and he in return studied her most attentively, drawing every thing after the life itself: which enabled him, not only in a short time to outdo the Bellini, then much in vogue, but to stand in competition with the Tuscan painters, who were the inventors of the modern school of design.

Some of Leonardo da Vinci's works coming into his hands, wherein there was great strength and an admirable management of the shadows, he was so captivated with that manner, as I

have already observed, that he never forsook it, but endeavoured to imitate and improve upon it in all his oil-paintings; which was the reason that his works had a spirit and life, never before witnessed in that country; and adding to this a beautiful colouring, he was far beyond all the Lombard school. He first applied himself to portraits, and succeeded in them wonderfully; particularly in that of the great Gonsalvo, whom he painted clad in armour, when he came to pay a visit to Agostino Barberigo, the Doge. This picture, in which a Page is helping him on with his armour, so pleased Gonsalvo, that he took it with him into Spain. Many copies of it are spread over Italy.*

Some of the best masters had been employed to decorate the Grand Council-Chamber with their compositions. To these were afterwards added two pictures by Titian, and it is much to be wished that he had executed the whole. Had it been so, the result would now have presented one of the most admirable and beauful spectacles in Italy. The same may be said, even when Giorgione himself was employed to adorn the Fondaco di Tedeschi, as is proved by the superior taste of that front which was exe-

* One is to be seen in the Louvre at Paris.

cuted by Titian. For Giorgione, thinking he had no better opportunty to display his skill, drew such figures as best suited his powers, without confining himself to any set story or appropriate subject: accordingly, you see in some places figures of women, in others those of youths in various attitudes; lions' heads, angels, Cupids, and other objects, blended together; the meaning of which no one to this day could ever discern. The figures, however, are admirable in their kind.

In the year 1512, died John Bellino, Titian's master, at the age of ninety. F. E. du Fresnoy says of this artist, that his manner, according to the taste of the time, was extremely dry; but that he perfectly understood architecture and perspective. There is, however, an excellent picture of his in the church of St Zachary at Venice. Bellino, at his death, leaving a composition imperfect, which he was painting in the *Sala del Gran Consiglio,* Titian was called upon to finish it; and he most willingly undertook the task, making great alterations in the design of his master. The picture represents the homage of the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa to Pope Alexander the Third; he is kneeling at the porch of the church of St Mark, and the Pope has his foot on his neck.

This certainly conveys a singular idea of Christian humility.

The story is this: Frederic Barbarossa succeeded his uncle Conrad the Third. He upheld three anti-popes against Alexander the Third; took Milan in 1162, razed the city, and sowed its scite with salt, for which Alexander excommunicated him. Frederic affected to treat this as a jest; but having lost a decisive battle between his own army and the Pope's, he at length solicited a reconciliation; and in August 1177, the Pope absolved him. Titian has in this picture introduced among the spectators, a multitude of portraits of his intimate friends and other persons then living, among which are to be particularly noticed those of Cardinal Bembo, Navagero, and Sannazarius. It was very proper he should leave in his public works a representation of the countenances of three of the most illustrious poets of the age. Raphael did the same in the groups on the walls of the Vatican. This work of Titian's was so much approved of by the Senate, that as a reward they bestowed upon him an office called *La Senseria*, worth about three hundred crowns a year. This office was always bestowed upon the best painter of the city, on condition that he should paint the

portrait of each succeeding Doge, created in his time, for the low price of eight crowns, to be paid by the Doge himself. The portrait was to be placed afterwards in the palace of St Mark. By the tenure on which he held this place, Titian was obliged to take the portraits of Pietro Lando, Francesco Donato, Mark Antonio Trevisano, and the Venieri. But as to the two Doges, brothers of the family of the Paoli, who were the last in his time, he was become so very infirm by reason of his great age, that he could not execute the task.

After he had finished the picture of Frederic Barbarossa's homage to the Pope, he was employed to paint, for the church of St Roque, a Christ bearing his cross on his shoulders, with a rope round his neck, dragged along by a Jew. This picture has been considered by many the work of Giorgione. It is held in such high estimation and is an object of so much devotion at Venice, that there has been more money offered to it in pious donations, than Titian or Giorgione ever received in the whole course of their lives.

About the year 1514, Alfonso the First,* duke

* Alfonso da Este, one of the first commanders of the age, and adored by his subjects for his fatherly care of them, which was

of Ferrara, gave orders for the decoration of certain chambers in his palace, in which were painted the history of Æneas; Mars and Venus: and in a grotto, Vulcan, with two smiths working at a forge. These were all painted by one Dosso of Ferrara.

The Dossi were two brothers, one of whom studied under Titian, and the other in Rome under Raphael; and yet both of them adopted so bad a manner, that they were unworthy of the praises of Ariosto, who mentions them in his writings. In the same apartments were several pictures by John Bellino; in particular, one in which is represented a large vat of red wine, surrounded by Bacchantes with their musical instruments; nymphs and satyrs in drunken gambols; and Silenus, a naked figure, riding on an ass, his hands full of grapes and other fruit, and surrounded by his crew. This performance, for colour, execution, and care, is

remarkable in a petty prince of those turbulent times. Though no scholar himself, his encouragement of learned men was such, that he made use of his own plate and purse to relieve the wants or pay the salaries of those he had invited to his court, whom he always treated as friends and equals. Among these was Ariosto, who pays a high tribute to his merits. He had a perfect knowledge of the mechanical arts, in moulding, casting, and directing artillery; and was an excellent engineer. He died in 1534, after a reign of twenty-nine years.

the best picture ever painted by that artist: yet it is too much in the dry hard manner of the German school of that period; for, in reality, he was imitating a picture of Albert Durer, which had just been sent to Venice, and was placed in the church of St Bartholomew, being much admired. It was filled with a multitude of figures painted in oil. This picture Bellino tried to imitate in his composition at the Ferrara palace; but not being able to go on with it on account of his great age, Titian was sent for, as being considered the most excellent of their painters, and the fittest to finish the work. He, being very desirous of increasing his fame, undertook what was required with great readiness, and added a fine landscape to it. Though so superior in skill to his old master, he had such respect for him, that he gave him all the glory of the performance and wrote these words on the vat, *Johannes Bellinus*, MCCCCCXIV. When this work was finished, Titian began two other subjects from his own designs, to embellish two compartments of the chamber, which remained to be filled up. In the first, he painted a river of red wine, with groups of figures, male and female, dancing, singing, and playing on various instruments. They appear to be half-drunk. Among them is one naked

woman asleep, of such exquisite beauty and truth of nature, that she seems to breathe and be alive. On this picture Titian has written his name. In the other, which is next to the above, and the first at the entrance into the room, he has painted a multitude of Cupids, most agreeably diversified in their attitudes, which have been the admiration of all who ever saw them. The principal group is about a pedestal in form of an altar, upon which stands the statue of Venus, with a shell in her right hand. This figure is executed with infinite grace and beauty. His mistress, Violante, served him as a model for all these female figures.

Upon the door of an armoury there, Titian executed a group of half-figures; our Saviour, and a Jew offering him the piece of Tribute-money. This and the pictures before-mentioned were considered by all the artists as the best that Titian had ever painted, and he was accordingly most liberally rewarded by the Duke of Ferrara; whose portrait he at the same time drew, with his hand resting on a large cannon; for which he received three hundred crowns. It was on this picture that Michael Angelo, when he first saw it, was so lavish of his praise, that in the warmth of his

admiration, he said he could not have conceived the art capable of such perfection; and that Titian alone was worthy the name of a painter. Titian likewise took the portrait of the Signora Laura, who afterwards married the Duke. These portraits are wonderfully fine; and it is certain that he worked with greater spirit and desire to excel, knowing that he had to do with a liberal and judicious patron. These two portraits are engraved by Giles Sadeler.

He also painted for the same prince, his famous picture of Bacchus and Ariadne. The three Bacchanalian subjects were afterwards in the possession of the Cardinal Aldobrandini. It is thought that in these three pictures he still retained somewhat of the style of Giorgione.

It was during his residence at Ferrara, that Titian gained the friendship of the divine Ludovico Ariosto, who was thoroughly sensible of his transcendant merit, which he has celebrated in his Orlando Furioso.

> " E Tizian che honora
> Non men Cador, che quei Venezia, e Urbino."
>
> " Cadora, blest by bounteous fortune's hand,
> Distinguished for her Titian's birth shall stand."

Ariosto bestows his praises no less liberally

on another painter, who had also been the disciple of Bellino and Giorgione. This was Sebastian of Venice, generally called Fra Bastiano del Piombo, from an office he held under Clement VII. He came to Rome with Agostino Ghigi, where he was undeservedly put in competition with Raphael. He died in June 1547, aged sixty-two. Titian, when at Ferrara, painted the portrait of Ariosto as well as that of Hippolito da Este.*

Titian having finished his task at Ferrara, returned to Venice, where he was employed by the father-in-law of Giovanni da Castel-Bolognese, to paint a picture in oil, the subject of which is a naked figure of a shepherd teaching a rustic to blow on the flute. It is enriched by a most delightful landscape. This picture was placed in Giovanni's house at Faenza.

Not long after, he was employed on a picture for the high-altar of the Church of the Minor Friars. It is in oil. The subject is

* Hippolito da Este, son of Alfonso, was elected Archbishop of Milan when only fifteen. Residing at the French court, he obtained many benefices, and was at length made a Cardinal in 1539. According to the ruling bias of his family, Hippolito was a great patron of artists and learned men, in whose company he was accustomed to relieve his mind from the vexations and tedious cares of state.

the Holy Virgin ascending into heaven, accompanied by angels: God is seated above, between two angels. The Virgin really seems to ascend. She has an expression full of humility, and her drapery floats lightly in the air. On the ground are the Twelve Apostles surveying the miracle, and expressing their joy and wonder by divers attitudes. They are for the most part larger than life; and it has been said of this picture, that it combines the grandeur of Michael Angelo, the pleasing grace and *venustas* of Raphael, and the proper colouring of nature. Yet this was the first public work Titian ever executed in oil; and he was not long about it. He was at this time about thirty-four years of age. With all its merit, ignorant and envious cavillers, and the blind vulgar, who had hitherto seen nothing but the dead, cold works of the Bellini and Vivarino, which were without any relief (Giorgione had done no public work in oil, or at most only half-figures and portraits) busied themselves in decrying this picture. At length, envy growing cool, and truth by degrees opening their eyes, the people began to wonder at the new manner introduced by Titian. It is true, this picture did not please the Friars; but the Im-

perial Ambassador expressing a great desire to purchase it, they saw their error, and held it in high esteem: and all the painters from that time studied to imitate our artist; but being put out of their usual way, found themselves at a loss. And in truth it seems almost a miracle, that Titian, without ever having seen the antiques at Rome, which had afforded light to all the most excellent painters, and with only the little glimmering he had received from the works of Giorgione, should have conceived the idea of perfect painting. But this picture was, even in Vasari's time, so damaged by neglect and ill-usage, that he says it could be but little understood, and that the figures were scarcely discernible. However, it has recently been found and restored to its original state, and proves to be a most inestimable work. There is a print taken of it by Hayter, a young English artist.

Titian also painted the altar-piece of the *Holy Conception*, in the same church where he now lies buried under the altar of the Crucifix. Monsignor Giovanni della Casa, of Florence, a man not more illustrious by birth than distinguished for his learning, was so pleased with a portrait which Titian had

painted of a Venetian lady, whom della Casa admired, that he honoured him with a sonnet, beginning—

> " Ben' vegg'io Tiziano, informe nove
> L'idolo mio, che i begli ocche apre, e gira," &c. &c.

CHAPTER III.

TITIAN INVITED TO ROME BY LEO THE TENTH—SOME ACCOUNT OF BEMBO AND NAVAGERO—PAINTS THE PORTRAIT OF FRANCIS THE FIRST AND OTHERS—HIS ACQUAINTANCE WITH ARETINE.

The fame of Titian now began to spread; it was no longer confined within the bounds of Venice, but diffused itself far and wide all over Italy. Many of the principal nobility now became desirous of securing some of his works; among whom were the Duke of Ferrara (who already possessed some) Frederic, Duke of Mantua, Francis Maria, Duke of Urbino, and many others. His name having reached Rome, Pope Leo the Tenth, by means of Cardinal Bembo, whom he had lately made his secretary, invited him with the offer of honourable appointments, in order that Rome, in addition to the works of Raphael and Michael Angelo, might possess some of the exquisite productions of his hand. But his friend Navagero, foreseeing that in

being deprived of Titian, Venice would lose one of her greatest ornaments, prevailed on him not to go, although Raphael as well as others were very anxious that he should visit the capital. The death of Leo, as well as that of Raphael, happening in the year 1520, Titian abandoned all thoughts of going to Rome, at least for that time. He painted a little picture for the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, of St John the Baptist in the desert among the rocks, in which there is an angel that seems absolutely alive. There is also a distant view of the country on the borders of a river, beautifully painted ; and indeed it is scarcely possible for anything to surpass the whole performance, either in colouring or design.

It was the earnest wish of Bembo, however, that Titian should have made a visit to Rome, where he would have seen so much to his profit and the advancement of his studies ; for Bembo was his friend, had known him long, and had been painted by him, as I have before hinted.

Having again mentioned the names of Navagero and Bembo, it will not be improper in this place to give some account of two men who were so well acquainted with Titian, and so much distinguished and admired in their day.

Andrea Navagero, born in 1483, was a great

Greek and Latin scholar, an admirable collater of manuscripts; and his editorial skill was displayed at the press of Aldus the elder, and Andrea d'Asola, in revising the editions, for the former of Quintilian, Lucretius and Virgil; and for the latter of Ovid, Horace, Terence, and the orations of Cicero. These orations were published in three volumes, and dedicated severally to Leo X, Bembo, and Sadoleto.

The dedicatory epistles are written with classic eloquence and purity. Modern oratory never took higher flights, than in the discourses delivered by Navagero before the Senate, on the death of the General D'Alviano, and the Doge Loredano. In the former, he gives a rich and animated description of the qualities which form the perfect commander; and having drawn the character of D'Alviano correspondent to those qualities, the hearts of his auditors acknowledged the greatness of their country's loss.

The eulogium on Loredano is in the same style; and in both these discourses the language is as dignified as the ideas. Every thing is classical. He addresses the Senate by Roman names. He invokes the superior powers under the title of the Immortal Gods; and to crown the whole, his Latin is so elegant, that the illusion of his speaking before a Roman Senate is

complete. This would sound like affectation in us; but at that period of the revival of letters and enthusiasm for the ancients, it would not do so.

He was one of the best modern Latin poets. His verses are a successful imitation of the grace and simplicity of the Greek Muse, which none but cultivated and elegant minds can admire. Like most other scholars of his time, he preserved no medium in his opinion of ancient authors. He hated Martial so utterly, that he was accustomed annually to burn a copy of his works, with solemnities and speeches explaining the reason of the act. Some unskilful flatterer thought to please Navagero by comparing some of his verses to those of Statius. Navagero immediately threw them into the fire. He was not however a presumptuous man. Just before his death, he desired that his fragment of the History of Venice might be burnt, as also his other works: for not having had time to give them his last corrections, he apprehended that they would not answer the expectations of the public.

Navagero died in France, at the premature age of forty-six, when on his road to meet the French king. Only a short time before, he had returned to Venice from the court of Charles the Fifth of Spain, where for four years he had represented the Venetian republic. After the death of Sabellico, he had been appointed keeper

to the noble library bequeathed by Cardinal Bessarion to the Venetian state.

Pietro Bembo was born at Ravenna, in the year 1470. He was celebrated for his erudition and literary accomplishments. He had received an excellent education under the best discipline of some of the most learned universities of the age. He had so highly distinguished himself before the reign of Leo the Tenth, that on that pontiff's exaltation to the papal chair, he was made his secretary with a salary of three thousand crowns, in addition to considerable benefices. On the death of Leo, Bembo, having amassed some property, and giving way to his passion for a beautiful lady called Morosini, no less than to his love of letters, returned to Padua. He there collected a splendid library, and formed intimacies with the learned and scientific characters of that place. He founded a Museum and a botanic garden ; and such was his liberality to poets and scholars, that his house became a centre of union for the taste and literature of all Italy.

Paul the Third,* though ambitious of adding such a name to his college of cardinals, was dissuaded from it by the malicious accusations of

* Alessandro Farnese, dean of the Sacred College, a learned and distinguished man, succeeded Clement the Seventh by the name of Paul the Third, in 1534.

portrait of the former by his godson. He also painted for him a large picture of the Flight into Egypt. The Virgin has alighted from the ass, and is sitting on a stone by the road-side. St Joseph stands near her; and St John is presenting to the infant Christ some flowers, brought by an angel from a neighbouring wood, which is filled with animals. This picture was placed by its possessor in his palace at Padua, in Santa Justina. In the house of a gentle man at Pesino, near St Mark's, is a most admirable portrait of a lady by our artist.

Titian was now employed on the portraits of Prince Grimani and Loredano, of the size of life. They are very fine. Shortly afterwards Francis the First quitting Italy for his own capital, in the year that Andrew Gralle was made Doge, Titian painted the portrait of that king, and it was considered a mighty performance. He afterwards executed a picture of the Virgin Mary, with St Mark and St Andrew; to the latter he has given the visage of the reigning Doge. This exquisite performance is in the hall of the college at Venice. Notwithstanding the importance of these works, the remuneration he received for them was not sufficient to place him in easy circumstances; and he is said to have been in a state bordering on indigence, when the

praise bestowed on him by his friend Peter Aretin recommended him to the notice of Charles the Fifth, as we shall see presently: so necessary is patronage to bring forward even the most transcendant abilities.

Some time before the Sacking of Rome by the French, in 1528, the celebrated poet, Peter Aretin came to pay a visit to Venice; and being a man of great genius himself, was naturally attracted by men of congenial minds, and soon formed intimate friendships with Titian and Sansovino, the sculptor. His acquaintance was not only a compliment to the former, but a great advantage, by spreading the fame of his pencil as far as that of the poet's pen: and particularly among that class of people, where it was of most importance, such as sovereign princes and others of the highest rank, which appears by the numerous portraits of them which he has transmitted to posterity.

Pietro Aretino, of whom I shall have frequent occasion to make mention, was the natural son of Ludovico Bocci, a gentlemen of Arezzo. He became famous as a poet, critic, and satirist. Being of excellent natural parts, and having by the spirit and boldness of his writings raised a high reputation, he repaired to Venice, where he was called "*the Scourge of Princes.*" King

Francis the First, Charles the Fifth, the Italian princes, cardinals, and even the Sophi of Persia, and other great personages, attempted by large bribes to purchase his friendship, either dreading his invectives, or liking his writings. On this he became so arrogant, that he had a medal struck with these words on one side—"*Il divino Aretino*;" and on the reverse, he was represented sitting on a throne, receiving the presents of obsequious potentates, with this motto, "*I principi tributati da Popoli, tributano il servidor loro.*" His lampoons, it was observed, had subdued more princes than the most powerful conqueror ever had done by the sword. It is to be lamented that a genius, which so strongly possessed the powers of satire and genuine humour, was not always employed in lashing the vices of men. The name of Aretin will be hated by the modest and the virtuous, for the indecencies, the profane and immoral writings, with which he is commonly understood to have insulted the world. His comedies were highly applauded; his letters are valuable; and his works of devotion may be read with equal satisfaction and surprise. He is said, in the latter part of his life, to have abandoned his profligate manners.

Among others, he ridiculed Peter Strozzi,

who threatened revenge, not by the pen but the dagger. In this he was joined by an accomplice, named Nicolas Franco, which so terrified the poet, that he confined himself to his house, till the departure of his enemy from Venice. The Church prohibited the reading of his works, on account of their licentious and profane tendency. Yet before he died, he wrote a paraphrase on the penitential psalms, the lives of the Virgin Mary, St Catherine of Sienna, and St Thomas Aquinas, under the name of *Partineo Etiro*, an anagram of his own name, as if he had been ashamed of having written a pious book.

Aretin was very well skilled in the art of design; and the best professors of his time valued him on that account. Vasari had such an esteem for him, that in his painting at the ducal palace at Florence, he introduced his portrait near that of Bembo and Ariosto. Sebastian del Piombo, Raphael, Leoni d'Arezzo, the engraver, and Serlius, the architect, were among his admirers. But his most intimate friend was Titian.

Aretin died at Venice, in the year 1556, aged sixty-five. His death is said to have been occasioned by his falling from a chair and injuring his head, when laughing immoderately

at some indelicate conversation at which he happened to be present. He lies buried in St Luke's church, with this epitaph by an unknown hand :—

Condit Aretini cineres lapis iste sepultos,
Mortales atro qui sale perfricuit:
Intactus Deus est illi, causamque rogatus
Hanc dedit,—" Ille," inquit, " non mihi notus erat."

In the letters of Aretin, we can find nothing but what indicates a mind teeming with gratitude, friendship, charity, and benevolence. He seems to have hated vice, and has daringly attacked it in its highest places, and has exposed the knaveries practised under the cloak of religion and the holy church: and the pious ecclesiastics, as might naturally be expected, have taken their full revenge upon his memory. They have loaded him with every possible vice, and have blasted his name to all posterity; and he may be held up as a terrible example to deter all those who may be inclined to meddle with priests or priest-craft. The only testimony that can be brought forward to vindicate his fame, or screen him from this deplorable character, is his firm attachment to and friendship with Titian, Sansovino, Vasari, Raphael, Bembo, the emperor Charles the Fifth, Francis the First,

and others of equal eminence. If Aretin was so bad a man as he is represented, how can we account for the esteem in which he was held by those whose characters are now so much respected? Titian indeed might have been gratified by his praise, of which he was not sparing, and greatly assisted by his recommendation; and so have courted his friendship, in spite of the blemishes in his private character. But then Charles, Francis, and Pope Paul the Third, whose exalted rank would have rendered all his efforts vain, had he been their bitterest enemy, treated him as a friend and companion. There is great reason to suspect that his faults have, at least, been greatly exaggerated by a host of enemies, such as ever will attend on those who satirize the vices of the great, or who differ, in the smallest iota, from the faith of the established church.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ST. PETER MARTYR. — OPINIONS OF ALGAROTTI AND SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS ON THIS PICTURE. — LETTER OF PETER ARETIN TO TRIBOLO THE SCULPTOR ON THE SUBJECT.—BENVENUTO CELLINI.

Let us now return to Titian and his works. It was at this time (1520) that he painted for the altar of the chapel of San Pietro Martire, in the church of St John and St Paul at Venice, the death of that saint. In this composition, the saint is represented larger than life, fallen on the ground, attacked by a soldier. He is mortally wounded in the head, and the agonies of death are in his face. His companion is flying, whose looks exhibit great terror. In the air are two or three little angels, descending with the crown of martyrdom, and surrounded by a sudden blaze of glory, shedding a light over the landscape, which is most admirable. It is a woody country. In the foreground are several alder-trees, executed with such perfection as it is much easier to envy than to imitate. The fear in the friar's face, who is making his escape, is well expressed. It seems as if one heard him

crying out for mercy. His action is rapid, as that of one who is in extreme danger; and his friar's dress is exquisitely managed, so as to show the proper developement of the figure in swift motion. There is no example of drapery better disposed for effect. The face of St Peter has the paleness usually attendant on the approach of death. He puts forth an arm and hand so well expressed, that, as a good critic has said, nature seems conquered by art. The tall branching trees, with the flashing lights of the troubled sky, would seem to indicate that something terrible was passing below, even if it were not visible; and the distant Alps discovered between the trees impress the spectator with horror of the dreary and desolate spot (so fit for such a deed) on which the murder is perpetrated. Indeed this composition is the most celebrated of any he ever painted, being the best understood of all his works; and I think that it is justly deserving of the name given to it, and by which it is universally known, "*The picture without a fault.*" This inimitable *chef d'œuvre* was one of the first objects that attracted the attention of the French, and was for a time one of the principal ornaments of the Louvre. It is now restored to its original place in the church of St John and St Paul at Venice.

Algarotti, in speaking of this picture, says, "Titian, the great confidant of nature, is the Homer of landscape. His scenes have so much truth, so much variety, and such a bloom in them, that it is impossible to behold them without wishing, as if they were real, to take an excursion into them. Perhaps the finest landscape that ever issued from mortal hands is the back-ground of the St Peter Martyr, where, by the discrimination of the trunks and leaves of the trees, and the disposition of the branches, one immediately discovers the different sorts of trees: while the various soils are so well expressed, and so exquisitely clothed with their proper plants, that a botanist has much ado to keep his hands from them."

"When Algarotti," says Sir Joshua Reynolds, adverting to this criticism, "praises it for the minute discrimination of the leaves and plants, even, as he says, so as to excite the admiration of a botanist, his intention was undoubtedly to give praise even at the expense of truth, for he must have known that this is not the character of the picture. Connoisseurs will always find in pictures what they think they ought to find: he was not aware that he was giving a description injurious to the reputation of Titian."

Again Sir Joshua observes, "The same excellence of manner that Titian displayed in history and portrait-painting is equally conspicuous in his landscapes, whether they are professedly such, or serve only as backgrounds. One of the most eminent of this latter kind is to be found in the picture of St Peter Martyr. The large trees here introduced are plainly distinguished from each other by the different manner with which the branches shoot from their trunks, as well as by their different foliage, and the weeds in the foreground are varied in the same manner, just as much as variety requires, and no more.

"It is to Titian we must turn our eyes to find excellence of colour and light and shade, in the highest degree. He was both the first and the greatest master of the art. By a few strokes, he knew how to mark the general image and character of whatever object he attempted; by this alone conveying a truer representation than his master, Giovanni Bellino, or any of his predecessors, who finished every hair. His great care was to express the general colour, to preserve the masses of light and shade, and to give, by opposition, the idea of that solidity which is inseparable from natural objects."

I will also give the judgment of Peter Aretin on this picture, contained in a letter addressed to Tribolo, the celebrated Florentine sculptor, some years after the period we have now arrived at.

"TO TRIBOLO THE SCULPTOR.

"Master Sebastian the architect* knowing my love for sculpture, and that I have some little judgment in it, has been endeavouring to explain to me the soft and easy folds of the drapery of the Virgin, which your genius, influenced by his desire, is so kind as to execute for me. He has also described to me the languid drooping fall of the limbs of our dead Saviour, which you have placed on his mother's knees with all the perfection of art. So that I have in his discourse beheld the affliction of the mother and the misery of the son, even before I have seen your work. But the miraculous effects of your industry have been also recounted to me by the author of that Saint Peter Martyr, which converted you and Benvenuto† into statues of astonishment when you first beheld it. Your eyes were dazzled

* Probably Sebastian Serlio, a celebrated architect.

† Benvenuto Cellini.

and your intellects confounded in looking at that work, which displays at once all the terrors of death, and all the real sorrows of life, in the countenance and person of him who has fallen on the ground. You were struck with wonder at the exact imitation, at the cold and livid hues which appear on the point of the nose, and at the extremities of the body; and you could not refrain from expressing your admiration aloud, when contemplating the figure of the dying man's companion, who presents in his whole appearance the agonies of cowardice and the paleness of fear. Truly, you pronounced a very just sentence on the merits of this grand picture, when you said to me that there was nothing in Italy that was finer. What can be more beautiful than the wonderful group of cherubs in the air, and the wind, which seems as if it were rooting up the trees, and throwing about branches and leaves in every direction? What a landscape is displayed in all the simplicity of nature! What beautiful rocks, clothed with grass, and bathed in the waters flowing from their springs! These are the wonders produced by the divine Titian, whose benign modesty salutes you most warmly, who offers himself and all he possesses to you, meaning that the love and

affection he bears your fame are unequalled. I cannot express to you how anxious he is to see the figures, which I before said you are so kind as to make me a present of. Believe me, I shall not pass over it in silence or without gratitude.

" PIETRO ARETINO.

" Venice, Oct. 9, 1536."

The history of St Peter Martyr is this. He was the General of the Dominicans, and of course a most powerful person in the Inquisition, and a violent persecutor for the faith, which made him many inveterate enemies. There was one family in particular, whom he had treated with excessive cruelty; and their relatives, who were officers in the army, were so enraged at his barbarity, that they resolved to revenge themselves on the tyrant with the very first opportunity: and having been informed that he was to make a visit into some distant province, in pursuance of his blood-thirsty schemes of piety, they lay in wait for him in a wood, through which they knew he must pass, accompanied by one person only, a lay-brother of the Convent. Accordingly, in this place they attacked him, and cleft his skull with a sabre, leaving him dead on the

spot; and this Saint is always represented with the sabre stuck in his head.

It was in the year 1523, when Titian was forty-three,* that Signor Gralle, having seen this renowned picture, and being a true friend to the artist, procured him a commission to execute a grand historical painting in the hall of the great Council-Chamber of Venice. The subject was the Victory of the Venetians over the Giaradadda or Turkish Janissaries. In this piece he has depicted a terrible battle. The fury of the soldiers is awful, as the fight took place in a tremendous fall of rain, like a deluge from heaven. It is a faithful representation of the action, and is esteemed by far the best of all the many historical pieces, that are in the Great Hall. The picture contains many different attitudes of the soldiers, the horses, and other remarkable objects; among them is a young man, who having fallen into a ditch, is gaining the bank by a violent effort of his leg. This figure had a number of admirers from its strong resemblance to nature. The picture, with some others, was unfortunately burnt; but the grandeur of the composition has been pre-

* The St Peter Martyr was painted in 1520, when Titian was forty years old.

served to us in the print engraved by Fontana, which is now very scarce.

In the same palace, at the foot of the stairs, he painted, in fresco, a Madonna; and not long after, having painted for a gentleman of the family of Contarino a most excellent picture of Christ sitting at table with Cleofas and Saint Luke, the gentleman, when he saw it, said it was so excellent that it ought to be in some public place, and not confined to the possession of any private person; therefore, for the love of his country and the good of the public, he presented it to the Doge and the Council, and it was for a length of time kept in the chamber of the Doge, but was afterwards removed to a situation where it might be seen by every one; that is, in the *Salotta d'Oro*, or Golden Chamber, facing the hall of the Council of Ten, over the door. At the same time, he painted for the school of *Santa Maria della Carita*, the Madonna when a girl, going up the steps of the Temple, in which are a multitude of figures, many of them portraits.

Also in the school of San Fontino, he painted a St Jerome in penitence, which gave great satisfaction to that society; but which, together with the church, was two years after destroyed by fire.

Benvenuto Cellini has given the following account of his visit to Venice, at the time when he saw and so much admired the St Peter Martyr.

"In some conversation with Tribolo, he told me that Giacopo Sansovino, his first master, had sent for him to Venice; and as he had never seen that city, and expected to gain considerably there, he was glad of the opportunity of making the trip. He asked me whether I had ever seen Venice? I answered in the negative; whereupon he pressed me to accompany him. I immediately accepted his proposal, and told the Duke Alexander that I was about to take a journey to Venice, and upon my return, should be at his service."

The duke was satisfied, gave him his consent, and a purse of fifty crowns. After relating many particulars concerning himself, not to our purpose, he continues:—

"Having received the money, I repaired to my friend Tribolo, who was ready for his journey. So we set out with the *Procaccio* or postman of Venice, called Lamentone, and travelled with him. In this manner we arrived at Venice, where I obtained permission of the Cardinal Cornaro to wear a sword. Having succeeded in my desire, we went to visit Giacopo del Sansovino,

the statuary, who had sent for Tribolo. He caressed me greatly, and invited us to dinner. In his conversation with Tribolo, he told him that he had no business for him then, but that he might call another time. Hearing this, I burst out a-laughing, and said jestingly to Sansovino, 'His house is at too great a distance from yours for him to call again.' Tribolo, quite shocked at his behaviour, said, 'I have your letter in my pocket, inviting me to come and see you.' Sansovino replied, 'that such men as himself, of abilities and unexceptionable character, might do that and greater things.' Tribolo shrugged up his shoulders, muttering 'patience' several times. Upon this occasion, without considering the splendid manner in which Sansovino had treated me, I took my friend Tribolo's part, who was certainly in the right; and as the former had never ceased boasting at table of his own performances, whilst he made very free with Michael Angelo and all other artists, however eminent, I was so disgusted, that I had no appetite for my dinner. I took the liberty of expressing my sentiments to him in this manner: 'Oh, Signor Giacopo, good men are known by their deeds; and men of genius, who distinguish themselves by their works, are much

better known by other people's commendations, than by vainly sounding their own praises.' When I had said this, we rose from table, and left the house, muttering our discontent; and a few days after set off on our return to Florence."

At the time Cellini was at Venice, Sansovino and Titian were in high estimation; and being both so eminent in their professions, they were also great friends. The latter, during a life which was prolonged to nearly one hundred years, was one of the most fortunate artists that ever lived. Men of letters, princes, and cities vied with each other in loading him with honours and riches. Nevertheless, he would never abandon Venice, but lived there in splendour, and in the enjoyment of his liberty. So highly were he and Sansovino esteemed by the Senate, that when a general tax was imposed on the inhabitants, they were the only citizens who were declared exempt. His friend Giacopo was born at Florence, and assumed the name of Sansovino, from the master under whom he studied, Andrea Contucci da Monte a Sansovino, one of the most eminent sculptors of his time. Giacopo's family-name was Tatti. His works gained him a high reputation at Florence and Rome. In 1527 he visited

Venice; where being appointed architect to the Procuratore, he renounced the study of sculpture, to devote himself entirely to his new profession, by which he obtained great credit and emolument. He was enabled to leave his son Francesco a noble fortune, which may perhaps account for the latter's having written so many indifferent books. Giacopo died in 1570, at the age of ninety-three.

Nicolo de Pericolo, to whom the above anecdote relates, was a Florentine by birth, whose extraordinary humour and vivacity, from his earliest years, acquired him the name of Tribolo. He was an eminent sculptor, and produced some specimens of such great merit, that they were believed to be from the hands of Michael Angelo.

He was also equally excellent in other things; and among other ingenious works, exhibited a topographical model of the city of Florence, one of the earliest efforts of that branch of art, which has been since carried to such a degree of perfection by Signor Exchaquel, and by George Pfaffer of Lucerne. His success in hydraulics, to which he also applied himself, was not equally great.

I add the following from Benvenuto Cellini:—

"When I came to Venice, I reflected upon

the variety of means by which my adverse fortune persecuted me; but as I found myself in good health and spirits, I resolved to struggle with it as usual. Thus I passed my time very agreeably in that beautiful and opulent city, where I visited the great painter, Titian, and Signor Giacopo Sansovino, an excellent statuary and architect of Florence, who had a considerable pension from the Senate of Venice. As we had been acquainted in our youth at Rome and Florence, I was highly caressed by both those ingenious artists. The day following, I met Signor Lorenzo de' Medici, who took me by the hand, and received me with the greatest affection imaginable. We had known one another in Florence, when I was employed to stamp coins for Duke Alexander, and afterwards in Paris, when I was in the service of the King of France. He had resided at the house of Signor Giuliano Buonaccorsi; and as he did not know where else to go for amusement, without running considerable risk, he passed much of his time at my house, observing the progress of the great works abovementioned. On account, therefore, of our former acquaintance, he took me by the hand, and carried me with him to his own house, where was Signor Priore degli Strozzi, brother of

Signor Pietro. They were very merry, and asked me how long I proposed staying at Venice, thinking I intended to return to France. I told them the affair that had made me quit Florence; and added that I intended to return to that city in two or three days, to re-enter into the service of my sovereign, the Duke. At this, the Signor Priore and Signor Lorenzo looked very sternly at me, and said, 'You would act much more wisely in returning to France, where you are sure of money and friends: if you go to Florence, you will only meet with disgust and disappointment.' I made no answer, but set out next morning, with all possible secresy, taking the road to Florence."*

* Lorenzo de Medicis was at this time keeping out of the way, in consequence of his concern in the assassination of Duke Alexander, as will be seen hereafter.

CHAPTER V.

SOME ACCOUNT OF MOSAIC-PAINTING — ADVANTAGES OF FRESCO-PAINTING — SCHOOL OF TITIAN — PAUL VERONESE, TINTORET, AND OTHERS.

It is not improper that I should make a few observations on that branch of the art of copying pictures, which was kept alive by the Serene Senate of Venice, when nearly dismissed in every other place; I mean the art of *Mosaic*. This was chiefly owing to the attention and assistance afforded it by Titian in his designs for different works, as well as by his procuring salaries for those who practised it. By his means, a number of persons were employed in divers works in the church of St Mark, and also to repair the old works of this kind; thus this branch of the art was brought to a degree of excellence that had never been attained either at Florence or Rome, in the time of Giotto, d'Alesso Baldinetto, Ghirlandaio, or Gherardo in miniature. All that was done at Venice in this branch, was from the

designs of Titian and other excellent painters, who furnished sketches and cartoons in colours, as the ground-work of the composition. To what perfection this art was carried may be seen from the specimens in the portico of St Mark's, where is inlaid in a niche the *Judgment of Solomon* so excellently well, that it would be impossible to surpass it with the pencil. In the same place is the *Genealogy of the Virgin*, by the hand of Ludovico Rosso, full of Sybils and Prophets, done with great taste and strength of relief. But none have succeeded better in this art than Vincentio and Valerio Zuccati of Treviso, who have left many historical pieces in St Mark's, particularly from the Apocalypse. Among them is one, representing the throne of God, supported by the four Evangelists, in the form of animals; also the Seven Candlesticks, and many other subjects, so well executed, that when viewed from beneath, they appear to be wrought in colours. Besides these, there are by the same hands, others near them of a smaller size, full of little figures, finished with wonderful care. In short, they are masterly miniatures, made with small pieces of stone of different colours. In the same manner, they executed many portraits; particularly of the Emperor Charles the

Fifth, of his brother Ferdinand, who succeeded him, and of Maximilian, the son of Ferdinand, who succeeded his father; also the head of the illustrious Cardinal Bembo, the glory of his time, and a number of others, highly finished with harmonious, clear, and glowing colours, and great effect of light and shade; so that it is impossible to desire any thing more perfect in its kind. In truth, it is to be regretted that this most excellent art of working in Mosaic, both for its beauty and eternal durability, is not more in use, and patronised by Princes and such persons as could be at the expense of it.

Besides the above-mentioned, who adorned the church of St Mark's with works in Mosaic, was Zucchere Bartolomeo Bozzato, who was also greatly admired. But the one who stood highest in public estimation, having the advantage of being advised and assisted by Titian, was one Girolamo. Indeed, all those who were the most excellent in this work, owed much of their reputation to his instruction and guidance.

I cannot but think that Titian had a considerable advantage in the improvement of his taste for colouring, from having been in his first studies taught fresco-painting, by which his eye was early inured to that fresh, clear,

and unadulterated tone which is unavoidably preserved in all those works that are done without oil. It was by degrees he crept into the knowledge of the use of oil, without having had his eye familiarised by early habit to the heavy, dingy, slimy effect of various oils and megilps; which, as they more and more prevail, soak up and destroy the wholesome freshness and purity of the tints, and reduce them at last to the saturated appearance of an oil-skin umbrella. Artists who paint in water-colours justly wish to give their pictures the force and finish of oil; as those who paint in oil should endeavour to impart to their tints, the clear and vivid purity of water-colours. And the clearness of the one, with the depth and solidity of the other, is what Titian possessed the power of uniting beyond any other painter that ever lived.

At this time, painting arrived at a higher degree of perfection than the moderns have ever attained; having acquired from Michael Angelo the utmost boldness of outline, the forms of the most robust bodies, and the highest grandeur of conception. In Raphael, it could boast invention, composition, variety of character, expression of the state of mind, and appropriate

draperies to his figures. Titian perfected the knowledge of the colours of bodies, with all the accidents which the modifications of light can produce in them; and finally Correggio added delicacy and the gradations of *chiaro-scuro;* a lovely style of painting, combining all the exquisite fascinations of grace and fancy.

Painting having reached so high a point of excellence, it was very natural that it should either advance under such great masters, or that it should degenerate into caprice and affectation; the latter of which unfortunately proved to be the case. The Tuscans, wishing to follow Michael Angelo, retained only something of his gigantic forms, his fierce contours; but without the knowledge, the feeling, and the genius of their master. Such were Salviati, Bronzino, Vasari, and others. In like manner, the disciples of Raphael took only some part of his style, but none of them took the essence. Julio Romano, studying to rival his gravity and expressiveness of countenance, made the physiognomy horrible and distorted. Polidoro, while aiming to give an air of ease to his figures, fell into licentiousness. Pierino della Vaga inclined always to the Tuscan style. Penni was cold and inanimate; Pellegrino Manari was

of short life: and thus finished that illustrious school.

Correggio left no disciples worthy of him, because Parmegiano, who immediately followed him, made a mixture of the style of Raphael and the grace of Correggio, which he overcharged.

Although Titian had not disciples who imitated him in every thing, the Venetians were nevertheless more fortunate in Paul Veronese and Tintoret, who though they imbibed the principles and formed their style from Titian, did not neglect the study of nature, and were therefore superior to the servile copyists of any master whatever. Titian, by reason of his great age, continued the practice of his art nearly as long as his scholars. He also happily outlived the turbulence of the wars which wasted Italy in his time, and was in that part of it which felt the calamity the least. His jealousy of others, however, prevented him from properly founding a school; for as soon as they gave any promise of excellence, he drove them from him, or diverted them from the pursuit of art. This happened with respect to Tintoret, and to his brother.

Tintoret was placed by his father as a disciple of Titian, under whom he had the advantage of studying for some time. The rapidity

of his advancement, which outstripped that of all his fellow-students, alarmed the apprehensions of his instructor, who had the meanness to expel him from his school. This indignity, so unjust and unmerited, did not abate his courage nor interrupt his progress; it only served to inspire him with more vigorous and extensive views, and he formed the daring project of creating a new style of composition. In a short time he established a school of art, founded on a union of the beauties of Venetian colouring with the Florentine grandeur of design; and to excite the emulation of his disciples, he had the following precept inscribed on the wall of his painting-room, *Il disegno di Michel Angelo, è il colorito di Tiziano.* He furnished himself with the best casts from the figures of the Tomb of the Medici, by Michael Angelo: these models were sent to him from Florence. They were taken by Daniel da Volterra, from the marbles on the tombs. From these, Lanzi says, his studies were unremitted; he often continued them by lamp-light, for the purpose of giving greater breadth and effect to his light and shade. To acquire a perfect acquaintance with foreshortening, which was less studied by the Venetians than the Lombards, he is said to have suspended his models in the air, and fre-

quented the lectures and dissections of anatomists to gain a complete knowledge of the muscular construction of the human figure.

I have given this account of Tintoret as an example of an excellent mode of study, and as demonstrating the good sense of the artist in correcting the errors his countrymen had fallen into.

"It might be wished," says Mr Fuseli, "for the honour of the artist and the man, that the mean jealousy of Titian and its meaner consequences, the expulsion of Tintoret from his school, had been less authenticated. What has been said of Milton, that at certain periods he was but one of the people, might be equally true of Titian, whenever he was not before his canvas. Folly, always a principal if not the chief ingredient in the character of jealousy and ambition, generally runs into the extremes it wishes to avoid, and accelerates the effects it labours to repress. The genius of Tintoret was not to be circumscribed by the walls of his master's study, and to one who under his eye had the hardiness to think and to choose for himself what he should adopt or not of his method, dismission was in fact emancipation. He now boldly aimed at creating himself the head of a new school, which should improve upon the

principles of that established by Titian, and supply its defects; he wrote over the door of his apartment, *The design of Michael Angelo and the colouring of Titian.*"

Francesco Vecelli, the brother of the great Titian, was born at Cadore in the Friuli, in 1483. After being instructed by his brother in the elements of the art of painting, he served some years in the army, and was probably induced to turn his thoughts to painting as a profession, by the extraordinary success of his brother. He painted some pictures for churches and other public edifices at Venice, which were of sufficient merit to alarm the jealousy of Titian; particularly a picture of the *Transfiguration* in the Church of San Salvador, which gained him great reputation. But his most celebrated performance, which has been often taken for his brother's, is a picture of the *Nativity* in the Church of St Joseph at Belluno. By the persuasion of Titian, it is said, he abandoned painting in 1531, and devoted himself to commercial pursuits.

Battista Zelotti was born at Verona in 1532, and was brought up in the school of Antonio Badile. He was the fellow-student and friend of Paul Veronese, whom he assisted in several important works for the public edifices at Venice.

He is called by Vasari, Battista da Verona; and is numbered by that author among the disciples of Titian. His picture of the *Holy Family*, in the Carrara collection, is painted entirely in the style of that master; and it is to his studies in that school that he was indebted for the warmth and harmony of colouring, in which he surpassed Cagliari. He particularly excelled in fresco-painting, and his ability in that branch induced Paul Veronese to ask his assistance in many of the great works on which he was engaged; and some of the frescos by Zelotti have been attributed to him. The great emblematical subjects painted by Zelotti in the hall of the Council of Ten, in the Palace of St Mark at Venice, have been engraved by Valentine Le Fevre as the works of Paul Veronese. He was more successful in fresco than in oil, although some of his works in the latter are deservedly admired; particularly his two pictures of the *Conversion of St Paul*, and *Christ with his Disciples in the fishing-boat*, in the cathedral at Vicenza. He possessed great fecundity of invention; his compositions are learned and judicious, and his touch is bold and animated; but he is inferior to Veronese in the grace of his figures and the beauty of his heads. He died in 1592, aged sixty.

Girolamo, mentioned above, was called *Il Titiano*. According to Redolfi, the family-name of this artist was Dante. He was brought up in the school of Titian, and was employed by that master to assist in several of his works. By frequently painting in conjunction with him, and sometimes copying his works, some of his pictures retouched by Titian have been taken for the latter artist's. He sometimes painted from his own designs: and his pictures in the church of St John at Venice, representing St Cosmo and St Damian, are worthy of the school in which he was educated.

CHAPTER VI.

GENERAL REFLECTIONS.—TITIAN'S ST. SEBASTIAN—HIS ALTAR-PIECE IN THE PESARI CHAPEL—ONE BY RUBENS AT ANTWERP—COMPARED BY REYNOLDS AND FUSELI.

It may be observed, that the times which produced so many great masters in the arts of painting and sculpture, were not deficient in men who excelled in polite literature. Phidias, Praxiteles, Parrhasius, Apelles, and Zeuxis were contemporary with the greatest men and best writers of Greece; with Alexander, Socrates, Sophocles, Demosthenes, and Xenophon. The same age that produced Titian, Raphael, and Michael Angelo, also boasted of Leo, Ariosto, Bembo, &c. Le Brun, whose fame has of all the modern painters most nearly approached to them, and Girardon, probably the greatest sculptor since the age of Clement the Seventh, were contemporary with Racine, Corneille, Boileau, Molière, and the most celebrated wits of France. This may be ascribed to the strict affinity of the elegant arts among

themselves; to the mutual assistance they lend each other; to the similarity of their objects, so that they delight in the same sphere; and to the temper and genius of their patrons, which forbade to divide arts so strongly united by nature.

The truth of this theory was, I think, fully shown in our own country in the last century, when we had to boast of the greatest painter in Europe, a native of England, who was surrounded by a set of most illustrious friends and companions, such as have not been surpassed at any period; viz. Dr Johnson, Goldsmith, Burke, Sterne, Fox, &c.—I shall now return to Titian.

In the cloister of the little Church of St Nicholas, belonging to the Convent of the Brotherhood, Titian painted a picture for the high altar. The Saint is the middle figure, arrayed in a golden cope, where the brilliancy of the metal is clearly discernible, so that it seems really interwoven with the dress. On one side are St Francis and St Catherine; the last figure has a most graceful turn of the head, and is altogether truly elegant. On the other side is a naked Sebastian, copied exactly from nature, without any additional beauty in the body or limbs beyond what he found in the subject he designed from; but so faithfully represented as

to colour, the texture of the skin, and effect of light and shade, that it seems not painting but the life itself. Pordenone, when he saw the St Sebastian, said, "I believe Titian has in this case really made use of flesh, and not colour." Yet the most extraordinary thing in the picture is, that there is not the least artifice or attempt at composition. The figures, all taken from nature, are ranged in a line, so as to be equally conspicuous. They all appear as it were intent upon a Madonna represented above, with the infant Christ in her arms, a very graceful figure, attended by a group of cherubs. The saints have an expression of modesty and sanctity that is inestimable. The Virgin looks down upon them with calm benignity. The head of St Nicholas is particularly fine, and full of infinite majesty. Titian is thought to have imitated it from that of the Laocoon; which Poussin in the *Ecstacy of St Paul* also took for a model: but both painters have softened the expression. This picture was engraved on wood by Titian's own hand, and afterwards by others. The church of this cloister is said to have been burnt down in the great fire, which destroyed a large part of the city in 1706.

I saw the lower part of this picture at Rome in 1778. It had been separated from the Vir-

gin and Child above, without any injury to the composition; for the upper and lower parts were nearly as void of connection as if they were two different pictures. The lower part was then in the possession of the Pope. On this performance, Sir Joshua Reynolds observes: "We cannot entirely refuse Titian the merit of attending to the general form of his objects, as well as colour; but his deficiency lay (a deficiency at least when he is compared with Raphael) in not possessing the power, like the latter, of correcting the form of his model by any general idea of beauty in his own mind. Of this his St Sebastian is a particular instance. This figure appears to be a most exact representation, both in form and colour, of the subject he then happened to have before him: it has all the force of nature, and the colouring is flesh itself; but unluckily the model was an ill-formed one, especially as to the legs. Titian has preserved the defects with as much care as the beauties. In his colouring he was large and general, as in his design he was minute and partial. In the one he was a genius: in the other not much above a mere copier. I do not, however, say this of all his pictures. Instances enough may be produced in his works, where these objections could not with any pro-

priety be applied: but it is in the manner or language, as it may be called, in which Titian and other painters of that school expressed themselves, that their chief excellence lies."

In the same church is a chapel, where the font of holy water is placed. On the font is a small figure in marble of St John the Baptist, by Sansovino. In this chapel, at the instance of the noble family of the Pesari, to whom it belonged, Titian painted a grand piece for the altar, representing the Madonna seated with the infant Christ in her arms, gently holding up one of his feet, and resting the other on one of her hands. Before her is St Peter, of a venerable aspect, looking at her, with one of his hands on an open book supported by the other, and the keys lying at his feet. There is also St Francis, and a man in armour holding a standard, with a Turk behind him, who seems to be a prisoner. At the lower part of the picture are the portraits of some of the Pesari family on their knees, which have the look of nature itself. Amongst these is the Bishop of Baffo, and his brother, just returned from a victory over the Turks, of which the Bishop is informing the others.

Had the Romish church never imposed any higher veneration for pictures and images than

as memorials of the persons and actions they represent, the reformed churches would not have considered themselves under the necessity of banishing these sublime ornaments from all places of public worship.

On the above picture, Mr Fuseli makes the following excellent remarks:—

"The true medium between dry apposition and exuberant contrast, appears to have been preserved by Titian in an altar-piece of the Franciscans or Frari at Venice: of which the simple grandeur has been balanced by Reynolds, against the artificial splendour of Rubens in a similar subject. It probably was what it represents, the thanks-offering of a noble family for some victory obtained or conquest made in the Morea. The heads of the family, male and female, presented by St Francis, occupy the two wings of the picture, kneeling, with hands joined in prayer, in attitudes nearly parallel. Elevated in the centre stands St Peter at the altar between two columns; his hand on the bible, the keys before him, addressing the suppliants. Above him, to the right, appears the Madonna holding the infant; and with benign countenance seeming to sanction the ceremony. Two cherubs on an airy-cloud, right over the centre, rear the cross; an armed

warrior with the standard of victory, and behind him a turbaned Turk or Moor approach from the left, and round the whole.

" Such is the invention of a work, which, while it fills the mind, refuses utterance to words; of which it is difficult to say whether it subdues more by simplicity, commands by dignity, persuades by propriety, assuages by repose, or charms by contrast. A great part of these groups consists of portraits in habiliments of the time, deep, vivid, brilliant: but all are completely subject to the tone of gravity that emanates from the centre. A sacred silence enwraps the whole: all gleams, and nothing flashes. Steady to his purpose, and penetrated by this motive, though brooding over every part of his work, the artist appears nowhere.

" The composition, and in some degree the lines, but neither the tone nor effect, may be found among the etchings of Le Fevre.

" To no colourist before or after him did nature unveil herself with that dignified familiarity in which she appeared to Titian. His organ, universal and equally fit for all her exhibitions, rendered her simplest or her most compound appearances with equal purity and truth. He penetrated the essence and general principle

of the substances before him, and on these established his theory of colour. He invented that breadth of local tint which no imitation has attained, by taking the predominant quality of colour in an object for the whole."

As it contains so excellent a lesson, I cannot omit introducing the criticism of Sir Johua Reynolds on these two pictures of Titian in the church of St Nicholas. Comparing them with similar subjects by Rubens in the church of St Augustin at Antwerp, he says,—

"The altar of the choir is by Rubens. From the size of the picture, the great number of figures, and the skill with which the whole is conducted, this picture must be considered as one of the most considerable works of that artist.

"The Virgin and Infant Christ are represented at some distance, seated on high on a sort of pedestal, which has steps ascending to it: behind the Virgin is St Joseph. On the right is St Catherine, receiving the ring from Christ. St Peter and St Paul are in the back-ground; and to the left on the steps, St John the Baptist with the Lamb and Angels. Below are St Sebastian, St Augustin, St Lawrence, Paul the Hermit, and St George in armour. By way of link, to unite the upper and lower part of the

picture, are four female saints half-way down the steps. The subject of this picture, if it may be called a subject where no story is represented, has no means of interesting the spectator: its value therefore must arise from another source—from the excellence of art, from the eloquence, as it may be called, of the artist. And in this the painter has shown the greatest skill, by disposing of more than twenty figures without confusion, and without crowding. The whole appears as much animated and in motion as it is possible for a picture to be, where nothing is doing; and the management of the masses of light and shade in this picture is equal to the skill shown in the disposition of the figures.

"There is a similar subject to this painted by Titian, which was in the church of St Nicolo de Frari at Venice, where he has represented the same saints, placed in a line without any connection with each other; and above are the Virgin and Infant, equally unconnected with the rest of the picture. It is so completely separated, that it has been made into two pictures; the lower part forming that which is now in the Pope's collection in the Capitol.

"By this disposition, Titian has certainly saved himself a great deal of that trouble of

contrivance which composition requires. This artless manner is by many called simplicity; but that simplicity which proceeds either from ignorance or laziness cannot deserve much commendation. As ignorance cannot be imputed to Titian, we may conclude it was inattention; and indeed he has sufficiently shown that it did not proceed from ignorance, by another picture on the same kind of subject, in the church of the Frari at Venice, where it is treated in a very different manner. Here the Virgin and Child are placed on an altar, looking at St George and another figure, which is kneeling. On the other side is St Francis, looking up at Christ, and recommending to his protection a noble Venetian, with four other figures who are on their knees. Nothing can exceed the simplicity and dignity of these figures. They are drawn in profile, looking straight forward in the most natural manner, without any contrast or affectation whatever. The figure on the other side is likewise in profile, and kneeling: which, while it gives an air of formality to the picture, adds also to its grandeur and simplicity. This must be acknowledged to be above Rubens; that is, I fear he would have renounced it, had it occurred to him. Rubens's manner is often too artificial

and picturesque for the GRAND STYLE. Titian well knew that so much formality or regularity, as to give the appearance of being above all the tricks of art (which we call the picturesque) is of itself grandeur. There is a calm dignity in the composition of Titian, and an animation and bustle in that of Rubens; one is splendid, the other grand and majestic. These two pictures may be considered among the best works of those great painters, and each characterizes its respective author. They may therefore be properly opposed to each other, and compared together. I confess I was so overpowered by the brilliancy of that of Rubens, whilst I was standing before it and under its fascinating influence, that I thought I had never before seen so great powers exerted in the art. It was not till I was removed from its presence, that I could acknowledge any inferiority in Rubens to any other painter whatever.

"The composition of Titian is of that kind which leaves the middle space void, and the figures are ranged round it. In this space is the white linen that covers the altar; and it was for the sake of this white linen, I apprehend, that he made an altar instead of a pedestal, in order to make the linen the principal light, which is about the middle of the picture. The

second light is the Virgin and Child, and the heads of the figures. The principal light in the lower part of Rubens's picture is the body of St Sebastian: that of the upper is the light in the sky. In this respect there is no apparent superiority on either side. Of both these pictures there are prints. That of Titian's is by Le Fevre, and those of Rubens's are engraved by Snyers and Remoldus Eynhovedts: there are parts of the Virgin and St Catherine, and the lap of St Augustin, which are unfinished."

CHAPTER VII.

TITIAN PAINTS THE PORTRAIT OF CHARLES V.—TRICK PLAYED HIM BY ALFONSO LOMBARDI — CHARACTER AND HISTORY OF THIS ARTIST.—VASARI.

Charles the Fifth, Emperor of Germany, accompanied by the Cardinal Hippolito de Medicis, having come at this time to Bologna, Titian, by means of his friend Aretin, caused himself to be sent for to take the Emperor's portrait, of whom he made an admirable picture. He is represented in full armour: and his Imperial Majesty was so much pleased with it, when finished, that he not only gave him a commission to paint several other subjects for him, but sent him a thousand crowns, as it is said; but it was in fact only five hundred, for he was ordered to pay one half of it to Alfonso Lombardi, the young sculptor, who had made a small figure in wax of the Emperor, and had been required by him to execute a larger one in marble.

This affair, I imagine, was not a slight vexation to our artist, as it put him on a footing with

one whom he considered vastly his inferior in art, as was in truth the case; but what increased his mortification was, that he found he had been in some degree outwitted by Lombardi, in making this figure of the Emperor, which he had done by stratagem, and thus deprived Titian of the honour of being the only artist who had that distinction to boast of, and which had cost him some pains to accomplish, while Lombardi gained his object without any trouble at all.

The affair is thus related.

Alfonso Lombardi was at this time at Bologna. He was well known to Titian, who had a great friendship for him, both as a man and as an ingenious sculptor. Alfonso had a great desire to make a wax model of the Emperor: and as a very small apparatus was necessary for this purpose, he could easily conceal it. So without giving Titian the slightest hint of his intention, he earnestly intreated the latter to be so gracious as to permit him to be in the room at the time his Majesty sat to him; and he would be contented to pass and act as his servant, to help him to his colours, &c. Titian being in a courteous humour, and having a kindness for Alfonso, as he was not a painter, readily consented to his request; and accordingly, the cunning Alfonso

very humbly followed our artist to the Emperor's apartment, and placed himself behind Titian's chair, so as to see him at work but not to be seen by him, as he was fully occupied by his own task.

Alfonso having as good a view of the Emperor as Titian himself, now secretly took out of his sleeve a little box in the form of a medal, and began to make a portrait of his Majesty in clay or wax; and had just completed it when Titian, having also finished his, was making his obeisance. The Emperor rose from his seat, and Alfonso was hastily shutting up his little box, and putting it in his sleeve, when his Majesty said to him—"Show me what you have been doing." He then was obliged, though with fear and humility, to deliver his work into the Emperor's hands, who having attentively looked at it, appeared highly delighted, and asked him—"Can'st thou execute this in marble?" "May it please your Sacred Majesty; yes!" replied Alfonso. "Do it then," said the Emperor, "and when it is finished, bring it to me at Genoa."

When Titian discovered this artful trick, I will leave it to any one's imagination to conceive his surprise, as he probably thought that Alfonso did it in a kind of competition with himself.

But whatever Titian's feeling on the occasion might be, Alfonso was much encouraged by the Emperor's praise, and applied himself to his work with more diligence than ever; and in the end finished the head in marble, which was considered by all who saw it as most excellent. He accordingly carried it to the Emperor at Genoa, when his Majesty generously gave him three hundred crowns more.

Having introduced this friend of Titian to the reader, it may not be improper to give some short account of his singular character. Alfonso of Ferrara was in his youth chiefly employed in works of stucco and small medallions in wax, in which he made an infinte number of portraits from nature of the nobility and gentry of his native place, several of which may yet be seen, both in wax and plaster. They are very faithful, and evince his ingenuity, taste, and judgment, particularly those of Prince Doria; Alfonso, Duke of Ferrara; Pope Clement the Seventh; the Emperor Charles the Fifth; the Cardinal Hippolito de Medicis; Cardinal Bembo; Ariosto, and other eminent personages. He was held in high estimation, as being the first who introduced that excellent method of making portraits from the life in the manner of medals. He was at Bologna at the

coronation of Charles the Fifth in that city. He was employed to ornament the gate of St Petronius; and there was not a nobleman of that court that did not employ him for something or other, both to his profit and honour. His ambition, however, was not satisfied by his occupations in china, wax, or stucco; his desire was to work in marble. Though he gained much by the former works, they appeared to him of small importance. He therefore procured employment at the convent of Saint Michelle in Bosco, out of the city of Bologna, to make the monument of Remuzotto, by which he acquired very great fame and honour. After this he was employed in the city to execute several small histories in half-relief in marble, for the arch of St Dominic, at the foot of the altar. He also adorned the gate of St Petronius, on the left hand as you enter the church, with several small marble tablets and histories, of which one of the Resurrection is particularly fine. But the work which the Bolognese admired most, was the Death of the Virgin, in round figures, made with a mixture of stucco, and very durable. This work was placed in an upper chamber of the Hospital della Vita; in this piece, among other excellen-

ces, is an unbelieving Jew, who fixes his hands on the bier of the Madonna.

He also made of the same materials a grand figure of Hercules, with the Hydra dead at his feet. This statue was placed in the public palace of the city, in the hall over the apartment of the Governor, and was done in competition with Zachary da Volterra; and it was universally allowed that Alfonso's was by far the most successful work. At the church of La Madonna del Baricano, he made of the same kind of stucco, two Angels supporting the Pavilion or Throne, in half-relief; and in the church of St Joseph, in the nave between the arches, he has represented in clay the Twelve Apostles (half-figures in circles) in *alto-relievo*. In the same city, in the arch of the cieling of La Madonna del Popolo, he made in plaster four figures larger than life in the same mixture of stucco: namely, St Petronius, St Proculus, St Francis, and St Dominic; excellent figures, and executed in a great style.

There are also many of his works in the castle of Bologna, and some others in Cesena, in the convent of the Friars of St John. It has been a subject of wonder why this able sculptor should have worked so much in clay,

&c. and so little in marble; for we find few besides himself who have been inclined to trust their fame to such perishable materials.

As he grew up, he was considered very handsome, having a very fine-proportioned person, with a healthy and spirited countenance. This undoubtedly was the chief cause of his being idle; and accordingly he seemed to practise the art as if more for his amusement or for a certain vanity only, having no relish for the slow and laborious process of cutting and chiseling marble: and (what is not very uncommon in the youthful period of life) he became a very great fop, and attired himself most fantastically. He used to wear round his neck and on his arms, as well as on different parts of his dress, fine ornaments of gold, and appeared more like a gallant or high-born courtier, than a studious artist desirous of fame in his profession; and in truth when he was thus decked out, he carried it very aukwardly; for his dress was more gaudy and extravagant than that of persons of quality; so that, while he put himself into competition with them, and wished to be taken for a man of wealth and consequence, instead of being admired and respected, he was laughed at and despised by all men of sense, and became the jest of his asso-

ciates. Alfonso, being thus enamoured of himself, became abandoned to pleasure and to pursuits little befitting a prudent and ingenious artist; and at length, by these habits, lost all the fame he had acquired.

He next took it into his head to fall in love, and this with a noble lady. One night, being at a wedding-ball in the palace of a Bolognese Count, this young lady happened to be there also; and she by chance became his partner. In the midst of the dance he turned towards her; and heaving a profound sigh, said, as he looked in her face with what he thought ineffable softness in his eyes,—

"S'amor, non è che dunque e quel ch'io sento?"
"If it be not love that I feel, pray then what is it?"

The lady, to put a stop to his impertinence, smiled and answered,—

"E' sera qualche pidocchio."
"Perhaps it is a l—se."

This answer being overheard by the company, was soon talked of through all the city of Bologna, and he became the jest of the whole town. But had Alfonso given his mind to his profession, instead of this wretched kind of vanity, he would certainly have done won-

ders. For if he produced such praiseworthy works with so small a degree of attention, what might he not have done, had his thoughts been bent on the art alone!

Alfonso's likeness of Charles the Fifth, though obtained by artifice, gained him great credit, as well as the praise and patronage of the Emperor; insomuch that Hippolito de Medicis, who had a prodigious number of sculptors, painters, and other ingenious men in his train, added Alfonso to the list, and took him with him to Rome. There he made a most admirable copy of the head of Vitellius, which gained him much fame in Rome, and confirmed the high opinion already conceived of him by the Cardinal. He was immediately commissioned to execute a statue in marble, the size of life, of Pope Clement VII, and afterwards one of Juliano de Medicis, Hippolito's father. This latter was never finished; and was afterwards sold at Rome to Vasari, who bought it with several pictures at the desire of the Magnificent Octavian de Medicis. It is at present in the collection of the Grand-Duke of Tuscany. When first bought, it was placed in the saloon of the new palace, in which Vasari says he himself had painted the history of Leo X. It stands over the great door, and is made of the

red clay found near Florence. In the same saloon there are heads of many others of the illustrious house of Medicis. Alfonso was employed by the Cardinal on a multitude of works of sculpture; but being things of small size, they are now either lost or destroyed.

At the death of Clement VII, in 1534, whilst Alfonso was at Rome, it was determined that a tomb for Clement and another for Leo X, should be made, and the business was entrusted to the hands of Alfonso, by the kind offices of the Cardinal Hippolito; and since he had taken a sketch of Michael Angelo, a model with figures in wax, which was considered very excellent, he was sent with money to Carrara to purchase the marble for the work. But shortly after, unfortunately for Alfonso, the Cardinal Hippolito died at Itri on his way to Africa; and the work was then taken out of his hands, and he was dismissed by the Cardinal Salviati, the nephew of Leo, and the Cardinals Redolfi, Pucci, Cibo and Gaddi, who were now become the directors of the affair. By the influence of Lucretia Salviati, the daughter of the great Lorenzo de Medicis, and sister to Leo X, the work was now given to Baccio Bandinelli, a sculptor of Florence, he having made a model in his life-time of Pope Cle-

ment VII. These two monuments I have seen in the church of the Dominicans at Rome, called *Santa Maria sopra Minerva*, and very tasteless things they are. The loss of this important work, so very unfairly taken out of his hands, drove Alfonso almost to distraction; he quitted Rome, and returned to Bologna. Thence going to Florence, he presented to the Duke Alexander a most beautiful head in marble of Charles V, which is now in Carrara, where it was sent by Cardinal Cibo, who, after the death of Alexander, begged it of the Chamberlain of that Prince.

When Alfonso arrived at Florence, the Duke wished him to make a bust of him. He had already had his likeness taken by Domenico de Polo, who worked with a wheel in precious stones, by Francesco de Gerolamo del Prato in a medal, by Benvenuto Cellini for his coin for the mint,* and in painting by Georgio Vasari

* In a letter from Bembo to Varchi, dated July 15, 1535, he says, "I have received the impressions of the seven different coins from the hand of Benvenuto, all as excellent as his other works."

The opinion of his contemporary Vasari, though he was by no means on favourable terms with Cellini, is no less honourable to him:—"When Benvenuto had the making of the coins in the Roman mint, they were the most beautiful that had ever appeared there. After the death of Clement, the reputation he had thus acquired obtained him the same situation at Florence, where he

of Arezzo, and by Giacomo da Pontormo. He was very desirous that Alfonso should take his bust; because he had made one in *relievo*, that was very fine, and far better than those executed by the artists of Ferrara. He was to do it in marble exactly from his model. At his return to Bologna he was to be furnished with every assistance he could require for the purpose.

Alfonso having received many presents and much courtesy from the Duke, returned indeed to Bologna; but had received a blow from the death of his patron Hippolito, which depressed his spirits to such a degree, and he pined so much for that and the disappointment of the great work of the two monuments, that it brought on a most pestiferous and incurable disorder, that preyed upon and consumed him by slow degrees, till at last it conducted him from this life to a better. He died in the year 1536, aged forty-nine, lamenting to the last moment his unhappy destiny, that had taken from him a patron, of whom he had just reason to expect every thing that can make life happy; and

made such exquisite specimens, representing the head of the Duke Alexander, that they are held in as high estimation as the ancient medals; and I think very deservedly so, as in this effort he appears to have even surpassed himself."

grieving that he had not died before so great a misfortune had happened to him.

Among the heterogeneous crowd which composed the retinue and filled the palace of Hippolito de Medicis, there was one who more particularly claims our notice, as the well-known friend of Titian, and also his biographer, correspondent, and profound admirer. Georgio Vasari was one of the most eminent artists and versatile geniuses of the age, but too much inclined to dictate to his companions, for which he frequently came under their lash. Deficient in that purity and delicacy requisite in a fine colourist, his pictures are rather distinguished for facility and freedom of design, acquired in the schools of Michael Angelo and Andrea del Sarto, than for grace and softness. He was a complete master of architecture and ornamental design. But however excellent in these branches, his reputation was raised still higher by his great work on the fine arts and biography of the most celebrated artists of Italy; a history to which the talents of his most distinguished contemporaries also contributed, and which was thus rendered one of the most authentic, elegant, and delightful productions in the Italian language. He is accused of partia-

lity to the Florentines; but in a work abounding in such general interest, we can almost pardon that.

His letters to his friends have equal merit with the more laboured works by which he acquired his fame; and as in these letters he gives an ample account of the arts in Florence, which cannot so well be explained to the reader by any other means, I shall have recourse to a literal translation of several of them from the original Italian.

CHAPTER VIII.

PART OF THE CORRESPONDENCE OF GEORGIO VASARI WITH HIS FRIENDS, SHOWING THE STATE OF THE ARTS AND ARTISTS AT FLORENCE, AND THE PATRONAGE AFFORDED THEM BY HIPPOLITO AND ALEXANDER DE MEDICIS, INCLUDING THE HISTORY OF VASARI.

I SHALL now quit Titian for a short time. As to the arts in general, they have been so often and so copiously dwelt upon, that I shall content myself with giving as much as I am able that is new, from these authentic letters, which are unknown in this country. In them may be seen the character of Vasari; his simplicity, his gratitude, his enthusiasm, his sorrows, his joys, described with sincerity and truth, displaying most distinctly the character of a good man devoted to the arts. If not a genius himself, he was an admirer of genius in others. The first letter I have of Vasari is addressed to Nicolo Vespucci, who had been his great patron and friend.

" TO NICOLO VESPUCCI, KNIGHT OF RHODES.

" I KNOW not in what words to express my gratitude to you, my dear Knight, as it is by your means I am returned to that state which I enjoyed four years ago, when I was in your house and under your patronage. For my good father Antonio, of happy memory, could do but little for me; although he spent the greatest part of what he got to support me in Florence, where he sent me when a child, supposing I had as much judgment as a man grown: thinking that I should consider his burden of a family of three girls, all younger than myself, and two sons, all of whom he had to maintain without the means; and added to this, that while he lived, my mother at every nine months brought him a child, still increasing his poverty. You know, Sir, too, that in the year 1527, in the month of August, the calamity of the plague took him from us, which reduced me to the low state you remember when I was obliged to quit the city and retire into the country, where I made pictures of saints for country-churches and private persons. I often wept when I reflected on the loss of the advantages that I enjoyed while he lived, when compared to the inconvenience I suffered after his death,

till I returned to Rome, and was taken into the service of the great Hippolito de Medicis. I then found the same comfort as I had experienced before in your house at Florence, in my infancy, when patronised by you and the Duke Alexander, the Cardinal's brother, and the most reverend the Bishop of Cortona, at a period when my childish innocence domesticated me, and made me an interesting object (through your means) for their favour and support. And what still adds to this is, that I find this great Lord not only affords encouragement to me, who am but a shadow, but to all ingenious men in every science and department of knowledge. How much then, after God, am I indebted to you, my honoured Sir, who introduced and recommended me to this great Cardinal! It is through you that my poor family, so lately in the shade, has been brought into light, and by such patronage I may in time perhaps become rich. And if God grants a continuance of my health and the happiness of remaining in the good graces of yourself and my Lord Cardinal, I trust that my desire and my diligence will not abate, not only to recover my lost time, but that my improvement in my profession may be such that all the trouble you

have taken on my account may not be thrown away.

" I do not know how to express in words the abundant favours that are done me, nor the infinite kindnesses that I constantly receive. And this is so encouraging, that I am ready to fly in the air, thinking I may at last be among the number of those who by the excellence of their works have gained offices in the Piombare * of the Pope or other honourable premiums given to artists. Certainly my spirits are quite revived, seeing that the time will soon pass, in which there was no one to provide a maintenance or portion for my three sisters, and that by my studies I may in time become useful and honourable. I return you many thanks for your good advice, in saying I should remember to be modest, amiable, and kind to every one, and not fantastic or brutal, as too many of our class are. I am very sensible that the greatest ornaments are virtue, affability, and a noble ingenuousness. I am at this time employed on a canvas with my colours, to execute

* The office of the Piombare is to put the seal of lead to the Pope's bulls, a place of so much profit, that it has been given to several celebrated professors as a recompense; for instance, to Bramante, Bastiano Veneziano, Guglielmo della Porta, &c.

a picture for my Lord Cardinal from a large sketch I have made. It represents a naked Venus, seated, attended by the Graces; one of whom on her knees is holding a mirror, another is lightly binding up her tresses with a string of pearls and coral to set off her beauty; the third is pouring the purest water out of a vase of emeralds into a shell of mother-of-pearl, filled with odoriferous herbs, to make a bath. Cupid is lying asleep on the robe of Venus, with his bow and quiver by his side. Around them are little Loves scattering roses and other flowers plentifully on the ground. Behind is a rocky country; and from apertures in the rocks issue streams of water, at which doves and swans are drinking. Between the branches of the trees is seen a Satyr slily contemplating the beauty of Venus and the Graces: he is so enamoured at the sight, that his eyes look like madness, and as one totally possessed. In short, his expression was what delighted the Cardinal and Pope Clement so much that when I have finished this, I am to paint a picture for them on a much larger scale, of a battle of Satyrs, Bacchanals, Fauns, and other rural deities. Indeed, my dear sir, as I said before, I am ready to fly into the air with joy, and I wish I could thank you enough for my good fortune. It is

scarcely more than two months since I came here; and I am accommodated with a handsome apartment and a bed-room, with a servant to wait on me. The Cardinal has also given me a new suit of clothes. Every time I go out to make any drawings from the antiquities or pictures in Rome, on my return I show them to my Lord, who receives them with pleasure, as the dessert after his meals, both morning and evening.

"My protectors are Signor Jovio, Signor Claudio Tolomeo, and Casano, who express their favour and friendship to me as if I were their child, by frequent advice and admonition to make me good and noble. I have thus written the whole of my affairs to you, that you may be easy on my account; and to say that what I can save, except those necessaries that I must have, I shall give to my family. Nor shall I ever forget that I was bred up in your house, and ever honour you, as is my duty and your just merit; nor will it be ever possible for me to forget your kindness. Christ preserve you in health.

"Georgio Vasari.

"Rome, February 8th, 15—."

"TO THE LORD DUKE ALEXANDER DE MEDICIS.

"The high commendation which your most illustrious Lordship has been pleased to bestow on the picture of the dead Christ I have painted for the Cardinal, will render it of much more estimation to his most reverend Lordship when he hears of it. It now occupies a place in his chamber, that he may have it near him; and he is graciously pleased to think well of it, and my work is held in as much respect by him as it was by yourself, and even more.

"When I return to Rome and have farther improved myself, I shall not fail to do something for your Lordship. And if it be agreeable to your Excellency that I should make a picture in which shall be the portrait of the Magnificent Lorenzo the elder,* in the very clothes he used to wear in-doors, I will look out for the portrait that is thought to be most like him in countenance, and take mine from it. The rest of the picture I have intended to be composed of my own invention, if it so please your Excellency; not but that your Lordship must be much better acquainted with the actions

* Lorenzo, surnamed the Magnificent, father of Leo the Tenth.

and manners of this most rare and exemplary citizen than I can be. It is my design in this portrait to introduce every ornament significant of the great qualities that made him illustrious in life, and show that all his honours were solely of his own acquirement.

"I shall represent him sitting, habited in a long gown of purple, lined with fur of white wolves. In his right hand he holds a handkerchief, from which hang the strings of a very large red velvet bag or purse of an antique form, which is under it. The hand rests on the base of a pilaster made to imitate marble, which supports an antique of porphyry, and on the pilaster is the head of Falsehood, biting her tongue at being discovered when touched by the magnificent Lorenzo. At the base of the pilaster, I shall insert this inscription:

'Sicut majores mihi, ita et ego post mea virtute præluxi.'

Above this I have made a mask of a most brutish and ugly visage, which is pressed down by the weight of a transparent and beautiful vase filled with roses and violets, with these words written on it, *Virtus omnium vas.* To this vase there is a spout which pours water in divers directions; one of these streams enters the mouth of a mask most beautiful in form,

and highly polished and crowned with laurel. On this mask are the words, *Præmium virtutis.* On the other side is another porphyry vase, representing an antique lamp, which has feet of a fantastic shape. The top is a mask of a grotesque countenance; and the oil from the spout of the lamp descends into the mouth of a mask, the tongue of which, serving like a sheet of paper, supplies the flame. This is to express or imply his singular excellence in government; not only his eloquence, but that in every way he was great and judicious, and made his descendants illustrious, and the city prosperous.

"If this my design should be satisfactory to your Excellency, please to send your commands to me at Poggio. However deficient my poor abilities may be, yet in this I have done my best, and entreat your Excellency's mildest judgment on it. I have desired Signor Octavian de Medicis, by whom I have sent this, to make my excuses to your Lordship: and can only say, my most illustrious Lord, that whatever I do for your Excellency will be always done with my whole heart.

"GEORGIO VASARI.

"Florence, Jan. 1531."

Paulo Jovio, to whom the next letter is addressed, was one of the literary circle of Leo the Tenth. He was originally a physician. It is said that he obtained his selfish ends by crooked means; and he found his reward in several valuable situations in the church, particularly the sinecure bishopric of Nocera, in the kingdom of Naples. After the death of Leo, he lived in a magnificent palace which he built on the ruins of Pliny's villa, near the Lago di Como. He consumed his wealth in sensual luxury, as well as in the liberal arts; and was not anxious to revive the primitive decorum of the episcopal character. His *General History of the World, from the year* 1494 *to* 1547 is his most celebrated work. The elegance of the narrative has been much admired; but the author can never be implicitly relied upon; for he was deficient in literary honesty. He was not a faithful chronicler. His own confessions, however, have prevented his readers from being deceived, and at the same time make a lamentable exposure of many public characters. He avows that he had two pens, one of gold, the other of iron. He promised an ancient genealogy and immortal glory to such as could pay him well for his labours; and he defamed all

those who would not purchase his flatteries. He offered his pen to Don John the Third, King of Portugal; and because that prince would not accept his services, he made no mention of a victory which gave consequence and renown to the Portuguese. If he had been well paid to write the history of Portugal, he would have inserted imaginary conquests, instead of suppressing the real one.

The Emperor Charles the Fifth, Francis the First, many of the Medici princes, and the Dukes of Ferrara, Mantua, Milan, and Urbino paid for the eulogiums of this literary profligate. There is a pleasant story told of Jovio and Pope Adrian VI. His Holiness took from the historian the pension and title which Leo X had given him, but appointed him, in lieu, to the canonry of the cathedral of Como, upon the express condition that Jovio should celebrate him in his history. The meed of praise was profusely poured forth. But in another work *(De Romanis Piscibus)* published a year after Adrian's death, Jovio speaks of that prelate in terms of sovereign contempt, exhibiting him as a man perfectly stupid and incapable of business. There was a private reason for giving this unqualified censure. The vanity of our author had been reproved by the Pope. The

historian entertained an unfortunate idea of his being a great poet. His Holiness held no converse with the Muses, and was no friend to those who did. When he gave Jovio his benefice, he told him he did so because he (Jovio) was a learned man, an elegant writer, and no poet.

"TO THE MOST REVEREND BISHOP JOVIO.

"MY REVEREND LORD,

"I SEEM lost to myself by the absence of my Lord Cardinal and those many noble persons, that were my masters and my guides to every good. I was nourished by their presence and improved by their experience, by which I might have been enabled to acquire great skill in the art of design. But now, through my sorrow, I am weakened and have lost all my spirits. I no longer feel that ardour and fondness for my work which I had at first. The cause perhaps is that I have no one now, as formerly, to whom I can show my performance; there is no one now to raise my spirits by commendation or to facilitate my advancement by advice like my most Reverend Monsignor: therefore, I daily have less and less wish to do any thing. Yet this aversion which might hinder my progress

to fame as a painter, my sense and the force of my mind rebel against. I am also reduced to a most infirm state of health by the attack of a violent fever, which, I believe, was caused by my over-working myself the last winter. In this most forlorn state I lay, when Canigiano called in Master Paul Ebreo, a physician; and when I saw that Batista del Borgo, my servant, had taken the infection, I held myself as dead, not thinking more or less than that I should render up my spirit to him who gave it.

"But when, by way of comfort, my friends proposed sending me and Batista in a litter to Arezzo, I instantly recovered my health at the sound of the words; and accordingly every thing proper was prepared to convey me safely and commodiously to my family there; fully confiding in the good management and affection of my mother. However, soon after my arrival at Arezzo, owing to the ignorance of those about me, who did not understand my disorder, I had two relapses, which reduced me so low, that the smallest accident would have finished me. I often thought of you, my Lord; for had you been at Rome, when this happened to me, I should never have left it till I died, still comforting myself, that under the shade of the Cardinal, although I was not yet come to perfec-

tion, nor had achieved the end of our art, I should have died gloriously by having studied under his patronage. Thus would have perished that fame I might have acquired by time and diligence, if I had still enjoyed life. I beheld with great concern the situation of my mother, left a widow with very little from her husband, and so ill-prepared for the loss of a son, the chief hope of the family, with three little girls and one boy, only three years of age, without any prospect of receiving assistance from any one else. I deplored her state so much, and the love I bore her made me so miserable, that I thought it must certainly have killed me. Seeing the nourishment she had to subsist on was little more than bitter tears, it went near to kill me with grief, even more than the continual fever which never left me a moment. I cannot but think that the Almighty turning his eyes on the purity of the three little girls, on the innocence of the boy, and the affliction of my mother, took compassion on my distraction and the destitute condition of my family, caused by the loss of my father and the brother next to me, who in the year 1530, caught the plague from the army, at that time near Florence, and died, consigning the remainder of the family to misery. I think my fever abates, and that by small

degrees I am improving; but at present it is turned to ague. Yet by recovering my spirits, and returning to my former residence, I am in hopes of regaining my health entirely; for I think that change of air will, by the blessing of God, restore me to that good state of health I enjoyed before this illness attacked me.

"My having been so long confined to my chamber has occasioned some people to write to the Cardinal that I was dead; but when you read this letter, you will be inclined to think me alive; and more than that, I have made a design on paper, which accompanies this letter, and which I offer to your most reverend Lordship rather as a mark of my respect than any thing else. This *capriccio* is the invention of a gentleman, a friend of mine, who has supported me through all my illness. I hope you will like it; but that your Lordship and the Cardinal may the better comprehend its meaning, I have here given a description of it in as few words as I could.

"The tree in the middle is the tree of Fortune, which has its roots not all above the earth, nor all under it: and the branches are entangled with each other, and wherever they are clear of this entanglement, they are full of a multitude of knots, which bear a sort of fruit of those

honours and titles which fall to the lot of mankind, though sometimes interrupted. The leaves are round and light, to express volubility. The fruits are tiaras of popes, imperial and royal crowns, cardinal's hats, bishop's mitres, coronets of dukes, marquesses, and earls, tonsures of priests, friar's hoods, nun's veils and coifs, helmets and other secular dresses, as well for males as females. Under the shadow of this tree, are wolves, serpents, bears, asses, bulls, sheep, foxes, mules, hogs, cats, owls, goats, parrots, magpies, cuckows, bull-finches, water-wagtails, jays, snails, black-birds, grasshoppers, crickets, butterflies, and a swarm of other creatures. All these are in expectation of the gifts of fortune, who, with her eyes bandaged, is at the top of the tree, and with a pole batters down the fruit on the heads of the animals assembled under it. Thus the sovereign crown falls to the share of a wolf, who, consistently with the qualities given him by nature, drives his subjects to distraction, and devours his kingdom. The same of the serpent, who oppresses all that are under him, and poisons every good : or if the kingly crown falls on the bear, he acts according to his nature, with tyranny, ill-humour, and madness. The cap of the cardinal descends on the head of an

ass; such as pay no regard to virtue of any sort in any one; but live in a state of ignorance, feeding like animals, and often doing injury to others, like the M—— of B——, who shows more favour to slaves and parasites than to men of real merit. The coronet of a duke, a marquess, or an earl falls on the head of a fox, a tiger, or a lion. The cap of the priest lights on the head of a goat or a mule; the one begets young ones to supply the place of the husband, and the other gormandizes and spends his time in sloth and folly. It also falls on the hog, who wallows in filth; such priests we know, who practice every sort of dishonesty and vice.

"The nun's veil falls on the head of a cat; for we often see it happen that the government of a convent of nuns is in the hands of a woman with very shallow brains. The helmet of the soldier falls on the head of a wood-pecker, a cuckoo, or a parrot. The hat of a commoner falls on the sheep, the owl, the bull-finch, or the falcon. The female head-dress falls on the water-wagtail, the grasshopper, the cricket, or the butterfly. Thus all are invested with distinction, according as chance directs, and the fruit that drops from the tree, determines the fate of those on whom it falls. I have exhibited

the *capriccio* of my friend to your Lordship by the means of my drawing, which I have sent, notwithstanding the subject is rather satirical and profane; but I thought it so ingenious, as to be worth your notice, and that it might divert the Cardinal a little. In the meantime, I attend to the recovery of my health.

"Pray inform my Lord Cardinal that I have sent his letter to the Lord Duke Alexander, who, in return, has given me to understand that I am to go to Florence. But I shall remain here till the end of September; and in the beginning of October I shall obey his commands. From that city you shall be informed of my daily proceedings. Pray remember me to all my friends in your academy; and on my part kiss the hand of the cardinal.

"GEORGIO VASARI.

"Arezzo, 4th September, 1531."

I have preserved the foregoing letter as a curious and instructive specimen of activity of mind, the simplicity and *pains-taking* spirit of this early period; and to shew that when ingenious men bestowed such labour and attention on the merest trifles, we need not wonder they were able to excel in the greatest things.

"TO THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS THE CARDINAL HIPPOLITO DE MEDICIS.

"A few days after my arrival in Florence, I was enabled, through the gracious reception I met with from the Duke, to recommence my studies in design; and not only am I now free from the misery of the ague, but by the air of this place I am entirely restored, and feel myself as young and strong as ever. You, my Lord, are going to Bologna to the court. But I hope (if it please God) that at your return to Rome I shall be under your protection, as I was before you left it. Not that I am in want of any thing here, but I hope to increase in knowledge, as I increase in years; and that, assisted by your Lordship's munificence, I may arrive at the highest degree of skill that I can possibly attain.

"Not to deviate from the ordinary course of study of those who practise drawing and colouring together, I have made a sketch from which I intend to paint a large picture for the chamber of your most reverend Lordship. In this I have represented Our Lord Jesus Christ after Joseph of Arimathea has taken his body from the cross to bear it to the sepulchre. I

endeavour to give the reverence and respect with which the aged Joseph sustains the weight. One of the figures has hold of the body under the arm; the back of Christ rests on his breast, moving on sideways. Another with both arms holds round the waist as he walks on; while St John, having thrown down his garment, supports the body with one hand at the knees, and with the other at the legs. As he proceeds to the sepulchre, he contemplates with sorrow the dead body of his Saviour, accompanied by Mary Magdalen, St James, and Salome, weeping and comforting Our Lady, who is in a dark dress, and her eyes streaming, expressive of her grief for the loss of her son.

"In the back-ground are several heads of young and old, which give a richness to the composition. In the distance I have shown the two thieves with the wounds they have received when on the cross. The people are taking down their bodies to bury them. One person takes the legs on his shoulders; another twists one of the arms round his neck, carrying the weight negligently and rudely. I intend to colour it with the utmost of my power and ability. I have indeed good reason to do so, in return for the attention your most reverend Lordship pays me; and not to refrain from

following every sort of study, with a hope that the bread which you grant me for my support may enable me to do credit to your most reverend Lordship's patronage and that of your most illustrious house, which ever befriends and assists the poor and ingenious, as I know in my own particular case. I pray then, that by the grace of God, I may be able to produce fruit equal to your wishes, and to satisfy the wants of my poor family. With my whole heart I pay my humble reverence, as is my duty.

"GEORGIO VASARI.

"Florence, December 1531."

CHAPTER IX.

TITIAN'S PORTRAIT OF HIPPOLITO DE MEDICIS.—SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF THAT PRINCE.—REFLECTIONS ON PATRONAGE.

Pope Clement* set out for Bologna to have an interview with the Emperor Charles V, in the year 1529, for the purpose of crowning him. In 1530 the Emperor again paid a visit to that city; he was then on his return from Hungary with his army; and by appointment, he there met Pope Clement, at which time the ceremony of his coronation was performed by the hands of that pontiff.

In the midst of all this magnificence, Titian was not forgotten. Charles sent for him; and on his arrival sat to him for his portrait a

* Clement VII, called Julio, a natural son of Juliano de Medicis, brother of Lorenzo, who was assassinated in the conspiracy of the Pazzi, in 1478. He succeeded Lorenzo, a son of the unfortunate Pietro, in the government of the republic in 1519; and in 1523 was elected Pope, by the name of Clement VII. He died in 1534.

second time. It was at this time, also, that the artist took the portrait of the Cardinal Hippolito de Medicis, in his Hungarian dress of crimson velvet over a coat of mail, with a cap and feathers on his head. In one hand he holds a mace, and in the other a sword. He likewise painted a smaller portrait of the Cardinal, in full armour: both which are preserved in the Duke of Florence's collection.

As Hippolito was at this time a personage of the first degree of consequence, being the chief favourite of his kinsman the Pope, and endowed by him with vast revenues, and being a friend to men of merit in every branch of the fine arts, and a most eminent and liberal encourager and patron of them all, through the whole period of his short life; I therefore conclude that some record of him is indispensibly necessary when giving an account of the arts in the country in which he flourished. Though fond of literature and painting, he was still more fond of the profession and reputation of a soldier, which is the reason why the portraits of this churchman, by Titian, are always drawn in armour like those of a military hero.

Hippolito was the natural son of Juliano de Medicis, Duke of Nemours, the youngest

brother of Leo X. He was born, April 19, 1511, (before the marriage of his father with Filiberta of Savoy) but his mother's name is not known. She was a lady of Urbino. She is said to have intended to destroy him; but his life was preserved by those who had been charged to murder him. Hippolito, like the rest of his family, acquired a considerable share of reputation in the limits of a short life. As he was acknowledged by his father, though illegitimate, he was educated with the utmost tenderness and care under the eye of Pope Leo X and Clement VII. He gave early indications of an uncommon vivacity and judgment. His manners were extremely graceful; his person was pleasing, except that his legs were not perfectly straight, and he was accomplished in every manly and elegant exercise. He possessed all the qualities of a prince, but by no means those of an ecclesiastic. Alexander de Medicis was also the natural son of the Duke of Nemours, or at least passed as such; but was more generally thought to be the son of Clement VII, as that pontiff showed him the most parental attention and partiality, and on the first opportunity made him Duke of Florence. This preference of the Pope greatly exasperated Hippolito against the Duke; and

his mortified ambition discovered itself upon every occasion. Clement saw this with great uneasiness; and to preclude Hippolito from harbouring any criminal designs against Alexander, he obliged the former, much against his will, to quit the profession of arms and enter the church, when he made him Archbishop of Avignon. He also created him a Cardinal (January 10, 1529) when Hippolito was only eighteen. Notwithstanding this promotion, his inclinations were still more bent on war and poetry, than on prayer and divinity. He was oftener to be seen in a soldier's than a Cardinal's habit, and would frequently scour the streets at night with the wild gallants of Rome. He was, however, very liberal and hospitable to strangers.

I should here observe, that on the failure of the legitimate branch of Cosmo de Medicis, (usually styled the father of his country) by the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent, Alexander and Hippolito became necessary instruments in the hands of Clement VII, to prevent the credit and authority of the family from passing to the collateral branches derived from Lorenzo, the brother of Cosmo, which had gradually risen to great distinction in the state; and its representatives, at the time I am

speaking of, were two brothers, Giovanni and Lorenzo. The talents and accomplishments of the latter recommended him to Clement VII, under whose countenance he resided for some time at the Court of Rome; but an extravagant adventure deprived him of the favour of the Pope, and compelled him to quit the city. It appeared one morning, that during the preceding night the statues in the arch of Constantine, and in other parts of the city, had been broken and defaced; a circumstance that so enraged the Pope, that he issued positive orders that whoever had committed the outrage, unless it should prove to be the Cardinal Hippolito de Medicis, should be immediately hanged. This exception indeed strongly implied that the Cardinal was not free from suspicion; but whoever was the delinquent, Lorenzo bore the whole odium of the affair; so that it required all the influence that Hippolito possessed with the Pope to rescue his kinsman from the denunciations issued against the offender. It is said that the heads of the statues thus defaced and carried off, are yet extant in the museum at Florence. Lorenzo gladly took the earliest opportunity of quitting Rome, and returned to his native place, where he soon engaged in a

scheme of a much more atrocious nature, the assassination of Alexander de Medicis, his sovereign and kinsman, whom the Pope had made Duke of Florence, and had strengthened his power by a marriage with Margaret of Austria, a natural daughter of Charles the Fifth. The Pope at the same time sent Hippolito as apostolic legate into Germany to the court of Charles, who was probably requested to watch him and prevent his return without leave.

Some time afterwards, the Emperor set out for Italy; and the young Cardinal, who, as I have before observed, was more devoted to arms than to his present profession, and generally appeared in the accoutrements of war, out of a youthful vanity went thus attired with several other persons of consequence before the Emperor, whose suspicions were always awake, and who concluding that some treachery was designed, ordered Hippolito to be arrested. This juvenile folly being explained, he obtained his freedom, and was suffered to withdraw into the dominions of the Church. He next raised an army of eight or ten thousand Hungarians, or as some say, Italians, with which he contributed to the driving the Turks out of Istria, and acted in such a steady and prudent manner, that to him was given the care of protect-

ing the coasts of the Holy See, then invaded by Barbarossa, whose depredations caused universal alarm, as there were not more than two hundred Papal guards to defend the country from the fury of that ferocious infidel. Barbarossa, however, did not wait for Hippolito's arrival, so that he returned to Florence without having had occasion to risk his own person or the troops under his command.

Hippolito, who was now a Cardinal and an eminently wealthy man by the favour of Clement, became at once the patron, the companion, and the rival of all the poets, the musicians, and the wits of his time. Without territories or subjects, he maintained at Bologna a court far more splendid than that of any Italian potentate. His associates and attendants, all of whom could boast of some peculiar merit or distinction which had entitled them to his notice, generally formed a body of about three hundred persons, amongst whom were many eminent military men. Shocked at his profusion, which only the revenues of the Church were competent to supply, Clement VII is said to have enjoined the *maestro di casa* of Hippolito to remonstrate with him on his conduct, and to request him to dismiss some of his followers, as unnecessary to him. "No," said

Hippolito, " I do not retain them in my court because they are necessary to me, but because I am so to them."

His uncle Clement dying, the conclave sat to elect a successor to the papal throne, at which Hippolito assisted, and was the chief means of making Alexander Farnese Pope, who took the title of Paul the Third. But the Cardinal soon repented of his good offices when he found himself defrauded of the Legation of the Marches of Ancona, which Alexander had promised him in case he succeeded to St Peter's chair. Hippolito now openly avowed his resentment, left Rome, and returned to Florence.

Clement had had great difficulty in bringing about a seeming reconciliation between the Cardinal and Duke Alexander; but even this was only in compliment to their uncle, and neither intended to keep up appearances longer than an occasion offered for ruining the other. Hippolito envied and hated Alexander, who equally detested and feared the Cardinal. He knew his sacerdotal rank might be laid down, and that Hippolito wished for nothing more than an opportunity to do it. His inclination, he knew, led him to a married life; for it was with great concern that Hippolito had been prevailed upon to give up the alliance with Isabella, the heiress of Vespa-

siano Colonna, who had bequeathed her to him. Every passion of the soul was wounded, in Hippolito's apprehension, by Alexander's elevation; and the Duke thought every thing in danger so long as the Cardinal lived. Each therefore resolved to destroy his rival. Clement's authority alone prevented their resorting to violent means. The death of that Pontiff left them to act as they chose, and they immediately set to work to accomplish their wishes.

Hippolito had before attempted to seize upon the Government, but was disappointed; and he now, disgusted with his ecclesiastical trappings, which ill suited the rapidity of his motions and the vivacity of his character, conspired with Filippo Strozzi (who had married Clarice, the sister of Lorenzo, duke of Urbino) to deprive Alexander of his new dignity. Lorenzino de Medicis was intimately connected with the Strozzi; two of his sisters having married into that family, one to Pietro, and the other to Roberto, the brothers of Leone Strozzi.

Alexander was surrounded by his guards. Hippolito had in his palace a multitude of men of all nations: for he afforded protection to all who asked it. He was sometimes addressed by them in twenty different languages. Among the motley crowd were individuals of the most

flagitious characters; men who would not scruple at perpetrating any crime, howsoever odious and detestable.

With some of these he laid a plan for destroying the Duke, by means of a machine filled with gunpowder, similar to that made use of by the royalists in France to kill Napoleon, which was called the *Infernal Machine*. The Cardinal firmly hoped that on the Duke's death he should become sovereign of Florence, by the help of a disaffected mob or rather banditti in that city. But the design being discovered by the Duke, he immediately communicated it to the Pope, who had his eye on the great benefices possessed by the Cardinal Hippolito, which would be so convenient for his nephews, or (rather as I should say) his sons. Though he was loth to touch the Cardinal lest he should appear rapacious, yet he could not pass over this conspiracy without notice. He caused Octavian Zonza, a servant of Hippolito's, to be seized, a man of bad character, and a participator in his secret councils.

Hippolito finding that the plot was detected, before any attempt had been made, overwhelmed with shame and a guilty conscience, fled from Rome to a castle near Tivoli; but not conceiving himself safe there, and knowing the impossibility of being reconciled to or forgiven by the exas-

perated Alexander, he set out for Naples, or, as some say, with intent to accompany Charles V to Tunis, when he was suddenly taken ill at Itri, on the Appian way, between Gaeta and Fondi. Here he was rendered unable to proceed by the violence of his disorder, occasioned either by agitation of mind, the badness of the air in that part of the country, or, as is most generally believed, by poison; which proved fatal at the end of five days. He died on the 14th August, 1535, in the twenty-fourth year of his age, leaving his competitor in the undisturbed possession of his newly-acquired power.

His body was brought to Rome, and buried in the church of St Lorenzo. His death was a source of grief to his needy dependants, but highly pleasing to his enemies, and particularly so to Paul the Third, who immediately enriched his sons with his wealth; and especially Alexander Farnese, to whom he gave the high office of vice-chancellor, and the monastery of Tre Fontane, both which had been possessed by Hippolito. Thus died in early life the illustrious Cardinal de Medicis. To the character of this extraordinary man, I may add that he divided his time between the theatre, hunting, poetry, and music. He was a person of eminent abilities, and had made considerable

proficiency in several of the arts. His translation of the second book of the Æneid into Tuscan blank verse is considered as one of the happiest efforts of the language, and has been frequently reprinted. Amongst the collections of Italian poetry, may be found some pieces of his, which are very creditable to him. He detested his clerical functions; and he never put on his cardinal's robes, unless when any public ceremony particularly demanded it.

He left one natural son, Asdrubal, who became a knight of Malta, and died in that island, in 1565.

There is little doubt that Hippolito died by poison. It is said to have been administered to him by Giovanni Andrea di Borgo San Sepulcro, his steward or bailiff, who was instigated to it by Alexander. This suspicion was confirmed by his escaping punishment when he had confessed his guilt, and by his being afterwards received at the court of Alexander.

In contemplating the character or rather the conduct of Hippolito, I cannot omit the opportunity of making a few observations relative to patronage, its direction, and influence in respect to science and the fine arts. Good and evil, like the blending colours of the rainbow, are frequently so intermixed with each other, that

it perplexes the reflecting mind to mark the line of separation.

We hold the opinion that the Roman Catholic religion is big with evil: yet, on examination, we cannot deny that it has some peculiar advantages. If, for instance, we look into the records of history and science, to whom shall we trace the foundation of those numerous seminaries for the promotion of learning or those splendid buildings, which have employed industry and called forth taste in their erection, whether colleges, universities, public libraries, schools, churches, or palaces? Are not our thoughts drawn immediately to a Wolsey, the Medicis, Bembo, Farnese, Este, Barberini, Montalto, Ximenes, Rovera, Richelieu, or Mazarin with many others, who having had less power, are of less note? Yet all seemed to concur in one aim, which was that of adopting all men of talents and virtue as their family and kindred; and by providing asylums for those who should arise in after-time, to perpetuate their names to posterity as universal benefactors and everlasting patrons of every species of ability which can dignify mankind. Having themselves been bred in the school of science, they distinguished and valued it in others; and by means of their well-bestowed patronage, have

given to the world many individuals eminent either for learning, science, or virtue, that without their fostering care would have been lost to society.

Again, it may be observed, that when the prime minister of a country has been a Catholic prelate, it has been productive of several advantages: particularly, from his not having the same number of family-connections, so nearly allied to him by blood or marriage, as to produce in him a desire to aggrandise them even more than himself. Therefore that portion of natural affection which in others is warped or partially confined, as in fathers of families to their children, is in him diffused to the more general benefit of mankind at large, as he directs the influence of all his power, and bestows all his superfluous wealth towards the encouragement of learning, the sciences and the arts, which, at the same time that they contribute abundantly to his own glory, most materially assist the welfare of the community.*

The good effects of such praiseworthy examples extend their favourable influence often-

* Lord Bacon observes, in his Essays, that the greatest works have proceeded from childless men; and that, for the same reason, the charity of monks not being confined to their progeny overflows on human kind.

times where we might least expect it. We have an instance in the Venetian territory when under its former government. That country, though more absorbed in trade than any other, was yet not so lost to all refinement but that it could follow a laudable example. Hence we find the public halls of each fraternity richly adorned with appropriate paintings, executed by such of their countrymen as had gained the highest eminence in their profession, thus bestowing and receiving honour at the same time; and further, we often find annexed to those buildings a magnificent library, to which the most indigent student has free access.

As a contrast to the above, we have only to turn to those states where the power and wealth of a kingdom are thrown into the hands of a few grasping individuals whose sole object is the advancement of their families, who must be accommodated with titles of honour; and, of course, to support their rank, must be endowed with large pensions, and become a burden on the public. Swarms of such adventurers roll in affluence, whose scanty portion of intellect would hardly fit them for the lowest employments of life. Hence no lofty examples of munificence are held out to excite emulation. The desire of fame by high achievements is never

once thought of: nor the appropriating a small part of their abundance to the service of Apollo or the Muses, which they more readily devote to Bacchus. For need it be remarked, that it is the government in all states that forms the character and habits of the people, as parents mould those of their children?

CHAPTER X.

CLEMENT VII.—CATHERINE DE MEDICIS.—VASARI'S CORRESPONDENCE RESUMED.

I SHALL return to Vasari and his letters to his friends, having premised a few particulars which are necessary to understand the first of them.

Much important business was pretended by Pope Clement VII, in order to bring about a meeting with the King of France, which was encouraged by the French Cardinals. The real object of his Holiness was to marry his niece Catherine de Medicis to the second son of the King of France. To this end, attended by a great retinue of Cardinals, he embarked at Pisa in his own gallies, and after a prosperous voyage of a few days, landed at Marseilles, and was received with a salute of three hundred pieces of cannon. He was lodged the first night in the palace of the Duke of Montmorenci,

Grand Master and Mareschal of France. The next day he made his progress through the city, habited in his pontifical robes, and borne in a chair upon men's shoulders; before him a white horse was led by two men with silken reins, carrying the sacrament of the altar; then followed the Cardinals in full dress, mounted on their mules; after them came Catherine de Medicis, Duchess of Urbino, attended by a great number of Italian and French ladies and gentlemen. In this manner the Pope passed through the streets to the lodgings provided for him. Next day, the French King arrived, and immediately went with great solemnity to pay his duty to his Holiness. The marriage between the Duke of Orleans and Catherine was treated of and concluded, and the parties were married by the Pope himself.

Catherine de Medicis, called by the French historians the ornament and the scourge of France, was born at Florence in 1519. She was the daughter of Lorenzo, son of Pietro de Medicis, and Madeline della Tour, a relation of Francis I. She was the only legitimate descendant of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and would have succeeded to the Florentine throne, had not Leo X, and afterwards Clement VII, given the preference to the illegitimate male children of that family.

This princess, who was considered one of the most beautiful women of the age, and was thrice Regent of France, carried the ambition and political sagacity of her race to the highest pitch. Placed in the midst of civil and religious factions, it was her sole aim to rule them, and to render them subservient to her own purposes. Without being a zealot for the Catholic religion, she was the principal contriver of the celebrated massacre of 1572, which commenced on St Bartholomew's-eve, and continued for seven days throughout France, and in which more than forty thousand Hugonots perished. She died in 1589 at the age of seventy. It is curious, in the following letter, to trace the full-grown fury in the playful and mischievous girl of fourteen, and to hear Vasari's praises of all those virtues of goodness and benevolence, for which (according to immemorial usage) he gives her credit from his dread of the summary effects of the opposite vices, should he entertain any doubt on the subject.

"TO MASTER CARLO GUASONI.

"I have received your letter which you wrote to me from Rome, in which, Sir, you desire the portrait painted by me of the Duchess Catherine de Medicis, the sister of our Duke. The truth

is, I have not at present in my hands one of the size of life, and down to the knees, as you require. But such a one I have painted of the Duchess by order of the Duke, which as soon as finished was sent away to France to her new husband, his Grace of Orleans. From this I had to make a copy, which is now in the possession of Lord Octavian de Medicis; and from that, Sir, if you have patience, I will make another copy to be at your service. You have been in the service of the lady, and know the affection she has shewn to us all, and how justly she deserves that her resemblance should remain with us; and when she departs, her image will continue engraven on my heart. Indeed, my friend Carlo, I have so great an affection for her singular virtues, and for the kindness she bears not only to me but to all my countrymen, that I adore her (if I may be permitted to say so) as if she were a saint in Paradise. Her sweetness of temper cannot be painted; nor can I make a memorial of it with my pencil.

"A very laughable circumstance happened this week. I had left my colours with which I had been working on her portrait the whole morning, when returning after dinner to finish what I had begun, I found that my pencils had

been most busily employed in colouring my picture as dark as a mulberry or a blackamoor, so that it looked like thirty devils all alive; and had I not taken to my heels and scampered down stairs, I guess, from this commencement, that the young Duchess (for it was she who had done it) would most probably have painted the painter with as little remorse as she had his picture. But rest satisfied, you shall be served.

"Francesco Rucellai is here, and we are so happy in each other's friendship that we cannot desire more. I work much at the Convent of the Servites, where, by order of the Duke, I have a chamber; because first I have the portrait to finish, and after that I have to finish for my Lord Octavian a picture of Christ in the Garden. It is to represent the obscurity of night; and I have introduced, in various attitudes, Peter, James, and John sleeping, with their heads covered. The angel of the Lord with a bright light illumines our Saviour, whom he encourages in the name of the Father, to endure the impious death prepared for him for the redemption of our unhappy souls, and by his blood to cleanse the world from everlasting sin. Besides this, I do not cease from pursuing my studies in design, which is the reason of my continually improving

myself, being desirous of increasing the grandeur of our prince, and of serving him to the utmost of my power.

"We most earnestly desire your return to us, that we may enjoy your presence as we frequently do your letters. But pen and paper ill supply the place of tongue and voice, and the presence of a true friend; for I am neither comforted nor moved by written words. Therefore, return soon. I know you lose a continual consolation in being absent from the society we have here, by which I have been so much informed and improved, that if I remain but one day without seeing them, I suffer more torment than if I were beaten with rods. I know you would be delighted to see the animation of their open hearts, and to find their readiness to serve you. I hope you are in good health. I beg you would for me kiss the hand of the most reverend the Cardinal de Medicis, my perpetual Lord. I thought to have visited you with one of my pictures of the Three Fates, naked figures: one of them spins, another unwinds the yarn, and the third cuts the thread of human life.

"I have much still remaining to tell you, but unluckily my chamber is immediately over the court, where all the poor, the blind, and the lame assemble to say their prayers, as to-

day is Saturday, and to receive alms. It has been my fate to be tormented with them all the morning, and they have so distracted my brain, that I am scarcely able to recollect myself sufficiently to write these few lines, or to pay you the respect which is due to you, and which I ought to do in return for your most courteous and kind letter.

"GEORGIO VASARI.

"Florence, 1533."

"TO MASTER ANTONY OF MEDICIS.

"Soon after Philip Strozzi and your brother the magnificent Octavian had seen the picture done by Andrea del Sarto, which represents Abraham * going to sacrifice his son Isaac, which is now sent to Ischia to the Marquis del Guasto, they were both so much pleased with it that Master Octavian desired me to make a copy of it for him; but it was not in my power to make even the design, as it was soon cased up and sent away, so that very little of the original will be seen in the copy; and I have thus finished it at a venture. But accord-

* Andrea del Sarto painted this picture, which for a long time was in the gallery of the Duke of Modena, and was afterwards transported to Dresden. It was engraved; and the print may be found in the collection of the King of Poland.

ing to my commission, I have sent this work of mine, that when my Lord returns from Mugello, you may present it to him from me. And if he does not find in my picture that spirit, that effect, that fervour, and that promptitude shewn by Abraham in his ready obedience to the command of God to sacrifice his son, please to make my excuses to Master Octavian, and say that although I know what it ought to be, yet I have not been able to execute my desire. All are born ignorant, and from youth are learners; the hand is not always obedient to the head; nor can the young have that perfection which proceeds from experience and judgment.

"I know the Cardinal is all goodness, and that he will be satisfied; for I am sure this is the best picture I ever painted. I hope that by little and little I shall advance from one thing to another; and that one day it may not be necessary for me to make excuses for my labours.

"May it please God to grant us his grace, and make you as obedient to his holy service as he was who is represented in the picture I have now sent you!

"GEORGIO VASARI.

"From my house at Florence,
"February."

"TO THE MAGNIFICENT MASTER OCTAVIAN OF MEDICIS.

"Behold I have now finished the portrait of our Duke; and on the part of his Excellency, I have sent it to your house. As to the ornamental part of the picture, his Excellency having placed but too much confidence in me, supposing I had a genius like his own, gave me full liberty to use my own invention, and follow my own caprice, being very much satisfied with that which I did in the portrait of the Magnificent Lorenzo the Elder. I do not know if I shall give equal satisfaction in this much greater subject or please your Lordship, which is of the utmost importance to me, as you have the key to the Duke's heart. Pray, Sir, consider it minutely; and let me know if there is any thing wanting, or by which it can be made more complete, and appear more finished to every one's eyes: for my sole wish is, to give satisfaction to so honourable a Prince, and to be entirely obedient to you, who have so graciously kept me in your house, as if I had been your own son. And if I have not yet done any thing to be thought praise-worthy, the greater your bounty appears, as the whole fault must be in my want of talent; and this will

urge me on to study hard to improve myself as much as possible, that I may not be less acceptable to Alexander of Medicis, than Apelles was to the great Macedonian.

" I shall now give you an explanation of the picture.

" The shining bright armour at the back of the Duke is made to resemble a mirror: because the Prince ought to be such an example that the people may be enabled to see, as in a glass, the actions of his life. I have clad him in complete armour, all except the hands and feet, to signify that for the love he bears his country, he is always prepared against every dissension either public or private. The sitting attitude implies his having taken possession of the throne; and in his right hand he holds the truncheon of dominion in gold to support or command Princes or Generals.

" On his right (alluding to times past) are the ruins of buildings and broken columns, figurative of the siege of the city in 1530; and from an opening in the wall you see a man looking out with a countenance expressive of the restored peace, and with the sky above him now perfectly serene. The seat on which the Duke sits is round, having neither beginning nor ending, to show that his reign is perpetual.

Three trunks of bodies serve as feet to the seat: the number three being the perfect number. These bodies represent the people who are guided according to the will of him who holds authority over them, they having neither hands nor feet. The termination of these figures is the paw of a lion, being part of the animal which is the emblem of the city. There is also a mask tied with fillets, which is meant to signify the fickleness of these unstable people, who are bound together and pressed down by a fortress* erected by his grateful subjects to shew the love they bore his Excellency.

"The red cloth under the seat signifies the blood that was spilt in the suppression of those who conspired against the grandeur of the most illustrious house of Medicis; and the edge of the cloth partly covering the piece of armour on the thigh is to show that the house of Medicis also lost blood in the conspiracy by the death of Giuliano and the wounding of Lorenzo the elder.† The dry trunk of a laurel-tree, that shoots out a straight branch bearing fresh leaves, represents the house of Medicis almost decayed, but now in the person of the Duke

* The castle of St John the Baptist. This fort was built by Duke Alexander, and commands the city.

† The conspiracy of the Pazzi.

likely to be increased by a plentiful offspring to perpetuate his name. The Duke's helmet burning in the fire is to imply the lasting peace which proceeds from the Duke, who by his good government renders his people rich, tranquil, and happy.

"This, my Lord, is the way I have taken to declare my thoughts; and if the picture prove satisfactory to you and his Excellency, it will be the greatest recompence I can receive. And because from the obscurity of the matter, many will not be able to understand it, a friend of mine, who is in yours and the Duke's service, has expressed in a short poem, what I have given in so many words and lines. In these verses you will see the lofty flight of the poet.

Arma quid? Urbis amor: per quem alta ruina? Per hostes.
Sella Rotunda quid hæc? Res sine fine notat.
Corpora trunca monent tripodi quid vincta? Triumphum:
Hæc tegit unde femur purpura? Sanguis erat.
Quid quoque sicca virens? Mediceum genus indicat arbor
Casside ab ardenti quid fluit? Alma quies.*

"Georgio Vasari."

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* What means this armour?—Love for one's country. Who made these ruins?—The enemy What does this round chair imply?—Authority without end. What do these trunks of bodies bound to the chair signify?—Triumph. Why does this red cloth touch the thigh?—It represents blood. What does the budding branch on the dead tree mean?—It is the Medici family. What results from the burning helmet?—Calm peace.

In explanation of the foregoing letter, it may be proper to remark that Octavian de Medicis was related to neither branch of the Medici, who succeeded to the government of Florence. He was, however, a decided friend of their party, and possessed considerable influence and authority in that city. This was further promoted by his marriage with a daughter of Giacopo Salviati, no less than by his thriving qualifications as a courtier. He was arrogant and overbearing to his inferiors, hated by his equals; and was generally thought unworthy of the high station, which by little merit of his own he had obtained. He had the direction of all affairs under Duke Alexander.

Philip Strozzi was a wealthy Florentine, who married the daughter of Peter of Medicis. He was a person of distinguished merit and consideration in Florence, and was sent as chief minister from the Medici to the courts of France and Rome. When Alexander in 1535 usurped the throne of Florence, he joined the discontented citizens; but falling into the hands of Duke Cosmo, after many fruitless attempts to escape, he was thrown into a dungeon, where, after languishing a year, he put a period to his existence, like another Cato, in 1539.

Peter Strozzi, son of the Philip just men-

tioned, had at first entered into the ecclesiastical career, and had been many times flattered by Clement VII, with the expectation of a Cardinal's hat, the only dignity wanting to his powerful family; but finding his hopes of attaining this object defeated by the jealousy which had already begun to display itself between the Medici and the Strozzi, he betook himself to the profession of arms; and being cousin-german to Catherine of Medicis, entered into the service of the French in Piedmont, where he distinguished himself in battle, in 1536, as a colonel, under Count Guido Rangoni. In 1537, Duke Cosmo having succeeded to the throne of Florence, Strozzi placed himself at the head of the banished Florentines, who were desirous of making a last attempt to re-establish the ancient form of government in their city; but having advanced with too much temerity, and being obliged to engage with a superior force, he was completely defeated at Montemurlo, where his father remained a prisoner. In spite of so many misfortunes, Peter does not appear to have left Italy immediately, but to have lived some years in retirement at Rome and at Venice.

He afterwards conducted a body of soldiers from Italy to France, while the treaty of peace of Crecy was yet pending; and in July 1545,

embarked at Havre, where twenty-five Italian gallies joined the French fleet. Although subordinate in command to Annebaut, Strozzi had a great share in that maritime war, which was carried on to a great extent between France and England. The two fleets repeatedly engaged near the Isle of Wight; but as the English kept close to the shore, where it was difficult to combat them with advantage, Admiral Annebaut determined upon reconducting his forces to France; and landing at Dieppe proceeded to Arques, where the Court then was, on the 16th August.—*See Father Daniel's Account.*

"TO MASTER ANTONY PETER TURINI.

"Among all the friends of my late father, I have not yet found one who can be compared to you in zeal and affection; and on that account all the time I was at Rome till this hour that I am come back to Florence, I have sought how I might make a return for those obligations I owe you, and which were left me by my father to be paid in the best manner in my power. You have ever been a diligent and seasonable adviser to me, and have managed my affairs for me a thousand times better than I could have done myself. I say, therefore, that

I earnestly look out for some means, by which I might be able to return the obligations I have to you. And if it is my earnest wish to do my duty to the memory of him that is dead, it certainly becomes me to do so to those friends who are living, among whom I distinguish you in particular, knowing what an interest you take in the welfare of my family. I may, therefore, inform you that they have a protector and guide in Don Antonio, my uncle. And I may say, that in him my father is revived; and by the consolation I feel that my family are under his inspection, I can sleep in peace and attend to the pursuit of my art, as I am fully convinced of his bounty, and the desire he cherishes that I should become able in some degree to support my depressed, sorrowing and helpless orphan-family. And perhaps God Almighty in taking away my father so early in life meant to invigorate and spur me on; for had I been always in my present easy situation, and had not had the weight of the maintenance of three sisters on me, perhaps I should not have gone on with the same promptitude as you daily hear I am doing. Instead of being like my father a poor citizen and artisan, I am now, by the mercy of God, patronised by two of the richest, most powerful, most celebrated and most liberal Princes in all

Italy. One of these is Octavian of Medicis, my director and friend, who has recommended me to my other patron Duke Alexander; and I have given satisfaction to the latter and all his court by the portrait I have painted of him. I am now in fortune's favour to such a degree that the Duke has desired the Cardinal to let me remain here to paint a chamber in the Medici palace, the dome of which John of Udina in the time of Leo X. had painted in fresco; and that painting at this day is accounted the most beautiful and remarkable thing in Florence. If I succeed in my work, besides the fame and honour I shall gain, his Excellency the Duke has promised that when I have finished the chamber, I shall have a portion for my elder sister, and I have accordingly written to Don Antonio that he together with yourself may look out for a husband for her. The last letter you sent has raised my spirits in informing me that my second sister desires to be in the service of God, and to enter the monastery of the Murati; and that you have agreed with the nuns about the portion to be paid with her, and that they are quite content to receive as a part of it a picture in oil, for the interior of the convent, to be painted by me. Oh! where is the friend to be found that with so much compassion endea-

vours to relieve another from the burden which presses him down to the ground, as you have done for me, who have been loaded with misery till I was almost driven into the earth? My obligations to you are the greater and more singular, because without being at all allied by blood, your bounty has been the sole thing which prompted you to do so much for me. I am poor in every thing, except the grace of God; and unable to do you any service in return. But I shall ever pray God to continue you in prosperity; for you are always doing acts of piety, and your hand is ever stretched out to help and support the indigent and afflicted.

"I have sent you my design for the picture desired of me by the nuns, in order to satisfy them as well as yourself, who were the means of procuring it for them; and assure the convent that as soon as ever you return the design to me I shall begin the picture, and I will immediately give orders for the pannel to paint it on. They seem to think that the figure of the Madonna in the sketch of the Annunciation, is expressive of too much agitation for a female; but they should consider the word of the angel Gabriel, who says 'Fear not.' However I shall moderate the expression according to your advice. In respect

to the angels, I have made more than one; considering that an ambassador from heaven coming down on earth to give health and peace, and to save us from perdition, could not come alone. The cloud with God the Father in the air, attended by cherubims and sending forth the Holy Spirit, they think makes the picture too full of figures. This was my first thought of the subject, because in such an event the great cause of it should be attended by the whole heavenly choir. But pray give me freely their opinion; for as you have so kindly taken upon you to relieve me of the charge of my sister, I shall be happy to work months for the nuns, as it relieves me of that which has disturbed my quiet for many years.

"I remain,

"Always obedient to your commands,

"GEORGIO VASARI.

"Florence, March 1533."

CHAPTER XI.

[VASARI'S LETTERS CONTINUED.]

"TO MASTER PETER ARETIN.

"IT is but justice due to you, in return for the protection you have given me in retaining me in your house as your son, that I should immediately comply with your wish of seeing some work of mine. This has obliged me to send you, by means of Lorenzo the courier, one of the four Cartoons that I am now painting for a chamber in the angle of the Medici palace, which not many years since was the public gallery. And if it had not been that it would have made too large a package, I was determined to send you not only this but all the four in one roll. But you can judge of those that remain with me by that which I have sent; and you will be able also to judge of my manner and expression in the figures, and in the disposition of draperies according to the rank and quality of the persons.

Our most illustrious Duke has a vast partiality for the character and actions of Julius Cæsar, whom he imitates in his conduct; and if I live long and continue in his service, the palace shall be filled with the whole history of Cæsar, and all the actions he performed. But it is my intention to paint first all those subjects which are full of figures and of the size of life, like those I have in hand.

"The one I am now about is, where in Egypt Cæsar flies from Ptolemy, and seeing the destruction of the enemy's ships as well as his own, and knowing his perilous situation, he throws himself into the sea, and swimming with wonderful energy, whilst he holds in his mouth the Imperial banner, and in one hand his Commentaries, he boldly combats the waves with the other, and arrives safe on land, amidst boats full of bowmen and men with darts, who however do not oppose him. You will perceive I have introduced a number of naked figures fighting, for the purpose of showing study in the art, and also to explain the story where the galley-slaves engage furiously to conquer their enemies. If you are pleased with this, I shall be highly gratified; for it was your wish that there might arise a painter in your own country,* whose hand should

* Arezzo.

execute figures with an expression that speaks. Oh, my fellow-countryman! if God is to grant you that wish, pray for me that I may spurn the seductive enticements of the young and profligate, whose enjoyments deaden the intellects, and render them so sterile that they no longer bear such fruit as nourishes and keeps the name alive after death. But enough of this. Oh, my dear Master Peter, I have now resolved to become famous among the great geniuses of the age. Do not doubt but that I shall labour intensely if heaven grant me power, since Arezzo, that has never produced a painter above mediocrity, though fruitful in warriors and men of letters, has left it to me to break the ice.

"To return to my work. I am now revising my design for the second Cartoon. It is a night-scene, where the figures are displayed in the moonlight. Here Cæsar is leaving his troops on the banks of a river. They are lighting their fires and raising entrenchments. He being left alone enters a bark for the purpose of escaping, and encounters so tempestuous a sea that the mariners, thinking the heavens against them, begin to murmur, which he observing says, 'Fear not, for you carry Cæsar and his fortunes.' The sailors upon this fall to work, and steer the vessel through the wind and waves

with redoubled skill and courage. In the third picture, Cæsar is represented receiving all the letters his pretended friends had written against him to Pompey. He orders a large fire to be kindled in the midst of the citizens. (This subject I am sure you will be much pleased with.) The people are lending their assistance, full of admiration. Some are bending down to blow the fire; others are bringing wood, while the rest fetch the letters and papers. Cæsar is surrounded, by his express command, by all the chief people of the army to witness the act.

"The fourth and last represents his celebrated triumph. Around his car are a multitude of captive kings, of whom the buffoons are making their sport: next come the cars bearing the statues of the conquered cities, loaded with an infinite quantity of spoil, the prize and glory of the soldiers.

"This last one, in consequence of being interrupted by other matters for his Excellency, I have not yet been able to begin, although the other three are finished. They are in oil. I hope you are in good health, and that you still bear me in mind, who have so great a desire to see you again. Pay my respects to Titian and Sansovino; and when you have done with the Cartoon, send it to me; and be so

obliging as to tell me what they say about it, and give me your own judgment upon it. And with this I take my leave.

"GEORGIO VASARI.

"1533."

"TO RAPHAEL* DEL BORGO A SEPOLCRO.

"At the time I was finishing the third picture of Julius Cæsar, which Duke Alexander had employed me to paint for his palace, there came an express from Naples from his Excellency, saying that the Emperor was to pass through Florence, and it was ordered that Louis Guicciardini, John Corsi, Palla Rucellai, and Alexander Corsini should superintend the works of ornament and triumph which were to do honour to his Majesty, and to embellish this magnificent city. I have written to those gentlemen who are to be employed with me, and told them all I knew about the matter: and I myself have not neglected to make designs and think of inventions; but as for the four mentioned, they are men of abilities and can act for themselves, so that altogether I think you will see a most beautiful sight. I have solicited

* This was Raffaello dal Colle, who studied under Raphael d'Urbino and Julio Romano.

leave to finish my histories, because this chamber is to be the apartment of his Majesty; and instead of the story I had intended, I shall merely put up the Cartoon and finish it after his departure. The very great service you will be of at this moment, and the great need I have of you, make me intreat you (and I shall be very grateful for it) on the receipt of this letter, which I have sent by one of his Excellency's couriers, to set out for this place, without staying for your boots, sword, spurs, or hat. In short, lose no time; for those articles you may think of when you are more at leisure. This being the news, you will find me fully occupied in the hall of the palace of the Podesta at Florence; surrounded by bannaroles of drapery, on which are all the coats of arms and devices of his Majesty, fifteen yards in height and thirty-five in length. To paint these and decorate them with gold, there are sixty men employed, the best for this kind of work in Florence. These are for the service of the Duke in the mask at the castle. The lords of the festival have made me promise to make a front to St Felice in the piazza, full of columns and arches. This frontispiece is to project and be covered with ornaments, and will be a most superb affair, being thirty-one yards high with

stories and figures of a vast size. The gentlemen who were entrusted with this commission, would not undertake it, terrified by the vastness of the scheme and the shortness of the time; and as the plan has been drawn by Louis Guicciardini and the others, I have taken the whole burden upon my own shoulders.

"I should certainly not have required your assistance in such a troublesome task, had not these gentlemen, doubting my ability to do justice to their design, conspired against me; and thinking I am not aware of it, want to hinder me in the execution of my work; fearing that the Horse of Arezzo would deck itself out with the skin of the Lion of Florence.* I have therefore much need of assistance at this time of great haste. Come then, my dear friend, come and be near me. I call upon you to help me: pray do not disappoint me. Enable me to show these gentlemen that I, who have not a beard on my chin, am little in person, and young in years, can serve my Lord Duke without their aid: and that when I am asked who did the work, I may say that it was I who did it, and that wholly without their assistance.

"Dear, kind, good Raphael, do not fail to

* The Horse is the emblem of Arezzo, as the Lion is that of Florence.

come to your Vasari, or you will be cruel to your friend, and strangle my rising fame by the hand of Michelotto. In the mean time, before you come, I will have a sketch just put up (if you approve of it) of an engagement of cavalry between the Turks and our own soldiers (for the middle compartment, which is thirteen yards in height by nine broad) in which I shall represent the Turks driven by the Christians, still keeping up the fight, out of the gates of Tunis; there will be a great slaughter, and numbers of the dying and the dead trampled upon by the horses. In the air, aiding the Christians, are two large figures of Justice and Faith, armed and attacking the Infidels who fly before them. There are also two figures of Victory, which must be similar (each seven yards high): also a figure of Sculpture, working in marble the story of Goletta in Africa, and another figure representing the Expedition to Asia.

"I shall also do the story of the Coronation of the King of Tunis, and a multitude of other matters for those places where they are wanted; such as emblems of Victory, trophies, sports, and a thousand different ornaments. Pray do not delay coming; for the fervour that urges me on, and the indignation I have conceived against my competitors, makes me think that

if I had a sufficient number of hands to work under me, so much do I feel myself disposed in strength and will, I could do the whole work for the festival myself. Meanwhile I labour to finish the arch of the Gate of St Peter Gattolino, where there are two pillars of sixteen yards in height, each with a *plus ultra,* and on the basement a sea-piece with shipping. There is a large inscription on the gate, the letters of which will be two feet high: also a figure of large size, representing Falsehood biting her tongue. It will prove to my rivals that one, who is the most insignificant person in the state, as to his youth and slight knowledge, has been enabled, by honest endeavour and good will, to become their equal or even superior. Pray come joyfully. I wait for you with the utmost anxiety.

"GEORGIO VASARI.

"Florence, March 15th, 1533."

"TO MASTER PETER ARETIN.

"I am greatly fatigued from having worked most extraordinarily hard for a whole month together to do myself honour. I have been five days without sleeping, in order to get my work finished by this day. For know, my good

Master Peter, it was this very day that the Emperor entered Florence; and I will this evening give you a full account of my decorations and the magnificence of this grand city: of the triumphal arches, where they stood; by whom made; and whose invention they do honour to; and also how beautifully they were placed. All this was by the orders of our most illustrious Duke Alexander, who is worthy not only of this city, though the first in Tuscany, but of all Italy, at this time so distressed, miserable, infirm and troubled: because it is this great physician alone that could cure her heavy calamities.

"Now then you shall see the order of the decorations, and imagine the grandeur of our invincible Prince, when he receives a visit from his father-in-law. His Majesty slept last night at Certosa, a most beautiful lodging, richly ornamented: it was built in the year 1300, by Nicholas Acciajuoli, Seneschal to the King of Naples. The Emperor was accompanied there by our Duke, who returned in the evening to Florence, to attend in person to the engineers who were employed in these works.

"Accordingly by eight in the morning, the statues and the arch with all its ornaments were quite finished. So that on his return in the

evening he visited all the works, which made the workmen more ready to lend assistance where it was needed, and gave spirit to all by his particular attention to the ingenuity of the work and the indefatigable labour of those who had done or were doing things worthy of praise. But my hopes were but small, when at an early hour in the morning his Excellency mounted on horseback, attended by all his court, and went to meet his Majesty at Certosa; and, in passing by, examined every place where there were either statues, triumphal arches, or any sort of ornament. Many of these were not quite finished. When he came to St Felice in the Piazza, (where I had erected a front of wood forty yards high, with pillars, historical pieces, and various other devices) when he came, I say, to this place, and saw that the whole was quite finished, he was wonderfully surprised at the grandeur of the spectacle, and the expedition with which it had been done, independent of the beauty of the work. He then asked for me, and was told that I was half-dead with fatigue, and that I was now sleeping in the church, in order to recover a little from my lassitude, when, laughing, he ordered me to be called immediately. Thus roused suddenly out of my sleep, scarce half-awake, tired and fright-

ened, I came before him in the presence of the whole court, and he addressed me in the following words: 'The work, my George, that thou hast done here is the largest, the most beautiful, the best-understood, and has been finished with more expedition than that of any other master. I see by this the love thou bearest me, and for this obliging conduct, it shall not be long before thou shalt find that Duke Alexander does not forget this and all thy other labours. But how is it that at this hour, when thou shouldst be most awake, thou wast asleep?' Then coming up to me, and putting his hand on my head, he kissed my forehead and went away.

"I felt myself so moved by this kindness that my spirits which were but a moment before overcome by drowsiness were now quite awake, and the lassitude in my limbs seemed entirely gone, as much as if I had had a month's repose. This act of Alexander to me is not less in liberality than that of Alexander to Apelles, when he gave him a city, great wealth, and the lovely Campaspe. The Duke, examining in his way all the remaining works, at last arrived at Certosa, from which the whole cavalcade with the Emperor did not depart till about an hour after mid-day, in order to give us time to finish the decorations; and in this manner the

procession came at a slow pace towards Florence.

" The gate of St Peter Gattolino was that at which his Majesty entered; for we had destroyed the outer gate that it might not interfere with the magnificence of the city-gate, which had on each side a pillar with a basement of eighteen yards, which had on each square side of it some sea-fight, and on the pillars of Hercules, we represented the acts of the Imperial navy at the island of Pera. On the part that crosses the gate over the arch, supported by the pillars, on a large space is a concise inscription, in which are letters that measure two yards each, with his Majesty's motto, PLUS ULTRA ; and in the front of the tower over the gate is another inscription, with letters so large that you may read them at the distance of a third of a mile, with ornaments of wood to imitate marble ; and above this are his Majesty's arms ten yards in height, held by an eagle, that rests his feet upon the tablet of the said inscription. Under this tablet with the motto by way of bracket or support is a head of Falsehood biting her tongue, and bound by the fillets or bandages, that decorate the tablet for the inscription. Upon this tablet are the words: *Ingredere urbem, Cæsar, Majestati tuæ devotissimam, quæ*

nunquam majorem, nec meliorem Principem vidit. But as this is the work of my own hand, I say no more about it.

" Inside the gate, banks of earth were made for seats, and covered with tapestry, on which sat all the elder citizens and the nobility of Florence, properly habited in the ordinary mode of the time. These were to offer their duty and homage to the Emperor, to whom, as he entered accompanied by the Duke, they presented the keys of the city, which were accepted by his Majesty, but immediately returned to them. Then there came out to meet the Emperor at the gate of the city, all the wealthiest and most honourable gentlemen, and the Magistrates and Counsellors at law. The forty-eight Senators of Florence and their principal walked alone. Then followed the eight Governors; and after them all the officers, habited in mantles or gowns of velvet, satin, or damask, every one according to his ability or pleasure. The poorer officers and servants of his Excellency closed the procession. His Majesty now entered, having before him all his court, with his pages dressed in the richest liveries: then came the Duke of Alva, and the Prince of Benevento, and between them our Duke. The sword of state was carried before them by a mace-bearer.

"His Majesty was attired in a plain dress, and was met at the gate by fifty young men of the first rank, all drest in fine purple linen, spotted with gold. One party of them walked close by his stirrups, and another party supported the canopy of cloth-of-gold over his head. Passing the gate he came to the street that leads to the Convertiti, and arrived at the corner of the Cuculia, which was filled with people on the ground and at the windows. Multitudes of women and children were assembled, testifying their delight at the sight. At the side of the principal path and between the two crossings, was a large statue nine yards high, which moved a step forward, and turning towards his Majesty laughed and made a respectful reverence, and on the basement were these words: HILARITAS AUGUSTA. This figure was well done and was most highly extolled. The contriver of it was John Agnolo de Servi. It was gilt all over. The other half of the crossing, which leads towards St Felice in the Piazza, was a triumphal arch right across, and to be seen on each side, as well as underneath, finished with much labour. It had four fluted pillars, two on each side, which served as ornaments to the arch in the middle. The other side was a companion to the first; and at each

corner was a basement, in which was a flint and steel that set fire to the festoons which encircled the pillars of Hercules, on which were the *Insignia* of his Majesty adorned with flowers, Cupids, and various other devices. Between the two pillars were two niches for each part, divided by an ogee which moved the length of half the circumference.

"In one of these was a figure of Imperial mercy, surrounded by little children, who appeared stripped of their clothing, with these words above them: *Ob cultum Dei Opt. Max. et beneficentiam in cunctos mortales.* The other was a figure of Imperial power, with spoils strewed around, and these words over: *Sæpe omnes mortales, sæpius teipsum superasti.* Of the other two, one was the Christian Faith expressed by symbols applicable to the sacerdotal office, with this motto: *Ob Christi nomen ad alterum terrarum orbem propagatum.* Over this was a device with a cornucopia filled with regal crowns inverted; among which was that of Ferdinand, the Emperor's brother; of the others which came out of the mouth of the cornucopia was that of the King of Tunis, who had been reinstated in his throne by his Majesty the Emperor. Another appeared only half in sight, to show that Tuscany ought to be made a king-

dom, and the crown given to Alexander, with this inscription above: *Divitias alii, tu provincias et regna largiris.* On the other part of the arch were two histories on each side; that on the right was the coronation of Ferdinand King of the Romans, with these words over it: *Carolus Augustus Ferdinandum fratrem Cæsarem salutat.* The other was the defeat of the Turks at Vienna, with these words over it: *Carolus Augustus Turcos a Noricis et Pannoniis iterum fugavit.* Under the arch, at the bottom, there was a most beautiful design with a variety of ornaments and figures; and at the angles between the pillars, in front of the arch, were two figures of Victory on each side. And on the opposite side of the arch were pictures corresponding with those on the front; and instead of the four figures of Victory, there were a number of African prisoners delivered out of the hands of the Turks, and Turkish prisoners bound between a pile of warlike trophies. The architrave, frieze, and cornice similar to the columns, were of the Corinthian order, and cut in wood most superbly. Above the cornice, and in the same direction as the columns, was a quantity of spoils; and above the arch an inscription with letters of a vast size; and over all at the top were the arms of the Emperor, with the Eagle

bearing a branch of laurel for his triumphs, and an olive-branch to imply peace. The words of the inscription were: *Imperatori Cæsari Carolo Aug. felicissimo ob cives civitati, et civitatem civibus restitutam, Margaritamque filiam Duci Alexandro conjugem datam, quod faustum felixque sit, Florentia memor semper læta dicavit.*

"All the wood-work was entirely manufactured by Baccio d'Agnolo, and his son Julian, who was born, I think, in this city. It was a most excellent performance, and finished with the greatest care, and an exact imitation of marble touched with gold in some places. The historical groups were by Ridolpho del Ghirlandajo, a man of great practice, assisted by Michael his disciple, also a man of great talent. After passing this arch, his Majesty turned towards the Piazza of St Spirito to go to St Felice, where he saw, right facing him, the front before St Felice in the Piazza, done by my hand. This, by being placed a little obliquely, came to the head-angle of the street, and inclined to face the greater street. Thus it served to ornament both of them, and presented an object most magnificent and superb. The work had a basement of four yards in height, of the Doric order, supporting two columns of thirteen yards in height each. Between these columns

is a large historical picture of the same height, and nine feet in breadth, in which his Majesty is represented driving Barbarossa out of Tunis. In the middle are groups of horses larger than the life; some lying dead on the ground, others fighting with the Turks, who, as they fly, turn and annoy their pursuers with their long javelins. In the air are the figures of Justice and Faith, with naked swords, fighting in defence of the Christian religion. Above, in the frieze, are these words, *Carolo Augusto domitori Africæ*. This picture is between two others of a less height. In one is a figure of Victory, working in marble, to perpetuate for ever the capture of the gallies. The other is a similar figure of Victory, painting a picture of Asia and the preparations making to attack her.

" Above the grand cornice, supported by carved brackets, was the architrave and frieze, projecting over the historical piece in the middle. It had a grand frontispiece with a crown, which gave a wonderful grace to it. Above this is another series of histories. In the middle is the coronation of the King of Tunis, whom his Majesty had reinstated in his throne; in which are an infinite number of Africans returning their thanks to the Emperor for restoring their King to them. This picture

is in the centre; and directly over the figures of Victory are two circles with two female figures, supporting an inscription. That over the two figures who represent Happiness and Fortune has the motto, *Turcis et Afris victis.* The other, placed over the figures of Opportunity and Liberality, *Regno Mustaphæ restituto.* Above these is an order like the last cornice, and in which are cut pilasters, that project over the middle picture of the Coronation of the King of Tunis: and another circle, which exhibits Peace and Eternity, finishes the front.

"In the finishing, it was interspersed with trophies of spoils in relief, to ornament the work; and under the base were a number of groups of boys carrying barrows of an antique form, loaded with trophies; others bearing branches and limbs of broken trees, with armour and the fetters of galley-slaves; arrows, and Turkish bows and turbans, which gave a varied and novel richness to the whole.

"As to any opinion concerning the beauties or defects either of the composition, the particular figures, or indeed any of the parts that I have been describing, I shall not say a word, as they are the work of my own hand, for it would be vanity in me to praise them, and madness to

point out the faults. Therefore we will pass them over in silence. I will only say that the frame-work, made by Antony Particini, a most excellent mechanic, merits the highest encomiums; being contrived to support such vast beams across, and such a canopy of work above. All the rest depended on myself. And this work was completely finished when that of many others wanted something yet to be done to them.

" At the upper end of the great street, there was made in relief a grand figure of Hercules killing the Hydra, the ancient symbol and seal of Florence. This work having been done by Tribolo with his own hands, was a most excellcellent performance, and most highly praised. On the basement, which raised the figure very high, were these words: *Sicut Hercules labore et ærumnis monstra varii generis edomuit; ita Cæsar virtute et clementia victis vel placatis hostibus pacem orbi terrarum et quietem restituit.* His Majesty, in his progress, stopped at the façade of St Felice, and at the Hercules in the great street; it being a most enchanting scene. On the causeway and at the windows were the most noble and beautiful ladies of Florence. Proceeding to the bridge of Santa Trinita, there was a vast colossal figure recumbent, that made

a motion with one arm, to four other figures of the same size. Two were on the first bank of the Arno, on the side of the bridge nearest, and two on the other side of the bridge. The figure turned his head towards his Majesty, and held in his hand an oar; and with the other arm rested on a lion, with a rich frieze, on which were displayed groups of men such as get a livelihood by occupations on the river. This was a figure of the river Arno; and under the basement was this inscription: *Arnus Florentiam interluens; venire ab ultimis terris fratres isti amplissimi mihi pro gloriâ Cæsaris gratulatum, ut junctis unâ meis exiguis, sed perennibus aquis ad Jordanum properemus.* This statue moved its head with so much ease, that it seemed to be really alive. It was executed by Friar John di Servi.

"Of the first two colossal figures, one was to represent the Rhine, and had these words on the basement: *Rhenus ex Germania.* The other, with an oar in its hand, and some lizards round in the water, was meant for the river Bragada, and had these words: *Bragadas ex Africa.* These two rivers were by the hand of Tribolo, and were of great beauty, and very exactly finished. As to the other two statues on this side the bridge, one was the Danube, a full

figure with a huge paunch, carrying an oar, his hair and beard streaming with wet; these words were on the basement: *Danubius ex Pannonia.* The other was the river Iberus, a recumbent figure with an oar in his hand, and leaning on a very large vase overturned, spouting water from its mouth, with this motto: *Iberus ex Hispania.* These were executed by Raphael Montelupo with wonderful expedition, and were of great excellence, superior indeed to all the other statues; and being all gilded, they made a very rich appearance. When his Majesty saw the Arno and the ornaments on the bridge and the palace of Spini, with the Piazza of the Trinity, he was astonished, and said his eyes had never beheld a sight equal to this; for in the Piazza was a basement which supported an immense horse in relief, with the statue of his Majesty on it in complete armour, gilt all over, a work equally rich and beautiful, from the hand of Tribolo. The basement was the work of Tasso, on which these words were carved: *Imperatori Cæsari Augusto gloriosissimo post devictos hostes, Italia pace restituta, et salutato Cæsare Ferdinando fratre, expulsis iterum Turcis, Africâque perdomita, Alexander Medicis dux Florentiæ. P. D.*

"Proceeding through the city, his Majesty

found, at the corner of the street Strozzi, a Victory in full relief, six yards high, which presented to his Majesty a crown of laurel, and on the basement were these words in very large letters: *Victoria Augusta.* If this figure, wanting a master's hand as it did, had been executed by one more skilful, it would have surpassed all the others, as there was so much meaning in the action: however, it was not altogether bad. The artist was one Cesare, a sculptor, who by this his first *Victory* did not excite much envy.

"Well, his Majesty rode on through the street Tornabuoni to the corner of the Carnesechi, where was presented to his view a colossus of a vast size. It was a Jason offering the golden fleece to his Majesty. The figure was in armour, with a drawn sword in his hand; and on the basement were these words: *Jason Argonotaurum dux, avecto è Colchide aureo vellere, adventui tuo gratulatur.* This was by the hand of John de Servi, but though equally excellent did not strike so much as his first figure of *Hilarity,* near the Arno.

"Proceeding on, his Majesty came to the Piazza of St John, at the gate of St Maria del Fiore; where over the gate was a most imposing inscription, with the three theological

virtues, and on it these words: *Diis te minorem quod geris, imperas.* These, being by my hand, I shall pass over in silence. The Emperor then dismounting, the canopy was held over him by the young nobility, and he entered the church, which was adorned with tapestry on the inside, and lights all round the cornice and cupola. Indeed the cupola was most particularly beautiful, as it was divided into eight compartments, with a quantity of lights, and adorned with large draperies that hung gracefully down some way, and had a most admirable effect. His Majesty having paid his reverence to the sacrament, came out of the church, surrounded by the populace. He then remounted his horse, and proceeding to the street Martelli, he there beheld two immense figures, on two separate basements. One held in her hands a sword, a balance, and a book. The second had a serpent and a mirror in one hand, and the other was held up in the air, sustaining a globe of the world, on which were marked the sea, the land, islands, ports and cities, done with judgment and correctness. On this globe was an eagle, and above that a scroll visible on both sides. That towards the Piazza of St John, had this motto, *Ego omnes alites*: the other side, towards the Piazza of St Mark

had: *Cæsar omnes mortales.* Of these figures, one was Prudence, the other Justice; having these words, *Prudentiâ paravimus — Justitiâ retinemus.* This work was executed by Francesco da S. Gallo. The invention and effect were most excellent. Pity that the figures had not been a little better! This brought his Majesty to the corner of the Medici Palace, where there was, by the hand of Tribolo, a female figure all in silver in relief, which was eight yards high, and held in her arms naval spoils and implements of war in abundance, and presented an olive-branch to his Majesty. On the basement was written,— *Fiat pax in virtute tuâ.* The entrance of the palace, the hall and the stairs, were all ornamented and gilded. The columns, the cornice, the gate, and the arch above were separated into beautiful compartments by a quantity of foliage of ivy and vines, all full of *insignia* of the Emperor, wrought in relief, with friezes of every sort, so that it seemed the favourite abode and paradise of the sylvan deities. The whole of the entrance was most superbly done in compartments with similar foliage, friezes and devices of his Majesty's arms; and on the inside you saw in a circle over the middle arch these words: *Ave, magne hospes Auguste.* The

fountain of marble in the court-yard continued to throw up supplies of water. The chambers above stairs as well as below, that looked into the court towards St Lorenzo, were all hung with cloth-of-gold, and the other rooms with purple and crimson velvet, satin, and damask. Those below were the same as the first and second floor. The third story was hung with a variety of new and beautiful tapestry; in short, it was impossible to imagine any thing more rich and magnificent than the whole. His Majesty, in an extacy of admiration, said, 'There is only one Florence.'

"I know I have been prolix in my account, but my wish to satisfy you, and your having desired that when his Majesty came I should be very particular, has made me dwell so long on this relation; and moreover those magnificent subjects make every thing seem trifling but themselves. Do not be surprised, therefore, at this over-long letter, thus filled. However I will venture to send it, only saying in addition, that the nobility, the court, the strangers and the citizens remain struck with admiration at the grandeur and spirit of the Duke, and they all confess he is worthy of a much greater dominion than this. It now only remains for me to say, that this evening the

Duke on parting from me in the palace, said, 'If you write to Aretin, give him an account of the whole affair, that he may participate in this grand show, and remember me to him kindly.' And afterwards he addressed me in these kind words:—'Because you have had great fatigue in having completely finished the whole of the work you had undertaken, leaving nothing imperfect, while so many others, both painters and sculptors, have left theirs with something still to be added, and also considering the value and honour you have conferred on this triumph by your talent and zealous labour, it has altogether raised my esteem for you, and I hold you far more deserving than the rest who have been tardy in their work. Therefore I have ordered for you three hundred crowns above that which was intended to be paid you by the Commissioners who had the care of this business.'

"In the meantime, I hope for the recovery of my former strength, for I am at present quite exhausted. I will give you daily accounts of my other successes. Remember me to Sansovino and Titian.—I remain yours at command,

"GEORGIO VASARI.

"Florence, May 1533."

"TO MASTER PETER ARETIN AS A MOST HONOURED FATHER.

"Most divine Master Peter, I salute you; and because I have reason to know the sincerity and liberality there is in all your actions, I do not hesitate to send you a head in wax by the hand of that Prince and Sovereign of art, that only rival of Nature, that supernatural man,* desiring from the knowledge and judgment of art with which Heaven has endowed you, that you will keep it near you as a thing most precious. It being a mirror and repertory of every kind of science, I am certain you cannot have a greater or fitter ornament for your room; and I know that from the spirit which in this sketch is joined to such a profound knowledge of design in so remarkable, so wonderful a manner, you will not be able to refrain from praising it highly. I assure you I have had the greatest trouble in getting it from those who abound in such things, and who, though they know nothing about them, are fond of keeping them, merely to have the credit of possessing them. This is the reason why com-

* Michael Angelo Buonarotti.

mon people are so covetous of works of art. I assure you if I had not had the protection and favour of my most excellent Master Girolamo da Carpi, I doubt much whether I should ever have been able to procure this head. Such as it is, I freely give it you, not merely send it you to look at. And I do not at all regret depriving myself of it that I may make you a present of it. For as you have given me so many things, and as Heaven has endowed you with such understanding, you must certainly know that it is better lodged with you than with me. If you examine well my mind in regard to yourself, you will perceive that I have made you a gift of myself, of which you may be well assured. Therefore having me, you are also entitled to my property, and so we will make no more ceremony about it. Speaking of this, I am sorry that I forgot to send you the ears and some other things, together with a sketch of St Catherine by his hand. But I will send them in a packet, with some things of my own doing. The last you may always have; for being of a middle class, they are not difficult to be procured, like divine and perfect works. And if what I wrote in my last be not presumptuous, I hope you will remember about your portrait, which I expect with the

greatest delight, and shall prize it highly, as it will in some sort give me your company: besides, I shall value it as a fine picture, and as a favour from you. I should be glad of your other printed works, either bound or loose, to complete those I already have; and also if you have by you any writings that you consider of importance, they would be very precious to me; for in fact I read, I study, I adore nothing but your productions. Our courier, an honest, good man, will bring them with the same care as he has done other things of yours. You ought to notice him, for he bears you the greatest affection, and is miserable if I give him letters to others and not to you.

"As to your money, I have not, at present, any in my hands; the other sum which I expect every hour for you, I think cannot be now long in coming, and as soon as I have it and have seen what it amounts to, or if it be so much as you told me, I will not fail to send it you. It is true that since I left Arezzo, I have received letters from your sister, to whom I replied that till I heard from you I could not move in the business. I know you will not think it troublesome to kiss in my name the hand of the most excellent Master Titian; and to tell him that I adore him, and that in all I

can do for him I am always at his service, and that I expect him with more eagerness than the beggars do the soup on the feast-day of St Antony.

"The most reverend Marii, Master Girolamo, Alessandro, and Master Bernardino desire to be remembered to you, as I do myself; I, who am always at your service, as prompt and ready-drest as a new-made priest.

"GEORGIO VASARI,

"Florence, Sept. 7th, 1535. Painter of Arezzo."

"TO FRANCESCO RUCELLAI.

"Since you went into the country, my good Master Francesco, we have heard the news, that our Duke Alexander chooses that Signora Margaretta, his consort, should come here to lodge in the house of Master Octavian, your uncle. Therefore your chamber as well as mine and those of others must be given up to her Excellency. Master Octavian has determined that himself and all of us should take up our habitation in the Hospital of Lelmo. I never dreamt that in the midst of all our gaiety, we should all of a sudden have to go to the Hospital. Donna Francesca, his wife, will not hear a word of such a thing; knowing that in about

a month she will be brought to-bed, and would have to be visited by so many of her noble kinsfolk in so horrid a place, and would have such bad accommodation. As to myself, it is of little importance, as my ordinary abode is one of the servants' rooms, where since I came, I have commenced my picture. I have begun that, and the other that I had to do for the Society of St Roque. In this picture I have pourtrayed on a cloud God the Father, angry with sinners, and hurling thunderbolts on them, figurative of the plague. He is surrounded by cherubs; and on the ground on their knees are St Roque and St Sebastian, humbly praying that God would cease this scourge and have compassion on our weakness. Our Lady appears in the middle, holding her Son in her arms. Near her are St Ann, her mother, and St Joseph with a book in his hand, reading. There is likewise St Donato in the dress of a bishop, also praying for the people of Arezzo, he having been their pastor. Also St Stephen, the proto-martyr. I have in this picture occasion for a dog with a rough coat, and I am informed that you have such a one: if you will send him to me, I will take his portrait for the dog of St Roque, who carried bread to him in his cell. In short, you must make haste, so as to be here in two days,

for it is determined that I shall make a grand ornament for this ducal marriage; and this very morning I was commissioned to paint a variety of decorations over the whole of the apartments at the entrance of the court-yard, and orders have been given for preparing the scaffolding for the work immediately. There has already been a meeting of the artists; and Tribolo has begun at the gate of the palace an ornament of Termini, that reach to the imposts of the cornice of the arch; above which he will put naked figures enveloped in festoons that are to support the coat of arms, which is to be very large, and grasped by an eagle with two heads. On each of them is an imperial crown, and on the shield are the arms of the house of Medicis, with those of the house of Austria. Again I must solicit your return, because, besides a thousand fancies of stories I have thought of to paint, I have also great need of the help of Master John Amoretto with you. I am thinking of a figure of Hymen of a very large size, which I would do with my own hand. I intend that he should be surrounded by an infinite number of young virgins, whom he consigns to the vows of their husbands, and conducts them to celebrate their marriage by the nuptial-ring and consummate the chaste rites of holy matrimony. In the mean-

time, they will prepare at the gate of the Prato a triumphal arch, with historical pieces on it, and figures representing the rivers of this country and the cities of the duchy, rejoicing and offering tribute according to their degree and quality to this most illustrious lady. The city is thronged with painters and architects, so that the work may be finished quickly. We understand that his Excellency and his lady are now at Pisa, and within two days are resolved, to a certainty, to be at Poggio,* in order that the lady may recover from her fatigue and prepare herself to go on. They say that she will take a considerable circuit to make her entrance into Florence. Therefore we are not willing to destroy the works made on account of his majesty the Emperor, but shall let them remain as they are, in case his Excellency should choose to pass through the same way: that is, when they come to the bridge of Carraja, passing the Arno at the corner of the Cuculia at St Felice, going by the Corso as the Emperor did. But this

* Now called Poggio Imperiale, a magnificent villa, formerly a castle belonging to the Canellieri of Pistoja; it came into possession of the Strozzi, and afterwards of the Medicis, who retained it. It was famous even in the time of Lorenzo the Magnificent, who kept a menagerie of wild beasts there, long before any other prince in Europe had even thought of such a thing.—

morning a courier of the Duke's, who came from Pisa, said the report was that his Excellency would not pass the bridge of Signa, but go on to the gate of St Friano, and by the Piazza of the Carmini, taking his way from the corner of the Cuculia, and then as I have above described.

"Now you understand the whole matter, and must leave me to the business which prevents me at present from saying any more, especially as tomorrow we shall be all busy in making the preparations for their Excellencies.

"GEORGIO VASARI."

CHAPTER XII.

THE DEATH OF ALESSANDRO DE MEDICIS.—VASARI'S LETTERS CONCLUDED.

The Lady Margaret was a natural daughter of Charles V and Margaret Van Gest. She was betrothed, as I have before said, to Alexander in 1530. The nuptials were celebrated at Naples, February 1536, when the Duke visited that place, for the purpose of dissuading Charles from his intended expedition to Tunis. The bride did not arrive in Florence till the May following; having then but just completed her fourteenth year. But all these pleasing pageantries were soon followed by a dreadful reverse, in consequence of the assassination of the unfortunate Duke Alexander by his kinsman, the infamous Lorenzo.

This Lorenzo de Medicis, called also Lorenzino, was descended from Lorenzo, a brother of

Cosmo, surnamed, "the father of his country." He was at that time about twenty years of age, by no means deficient in talent, and that well cultivated. He was in strict intimacy with the Strozzi, avowed republicans; but faithless to both parties, he betrayed their designs to the Duke, in order to obtain his confidence. Having by these means become his favourite minister and the companion of his pleasures, he induced him to abandon himself to his inclinations without restraint. Lorenzo had long meditated the assassination of his cousin, as appears from the well-known anecdote of the reverse of Cellini's medal, which Lorenzo amused himself with turning into a pun. He had been humorously called a philosopher by the Duke, not because he studied, but because he was fond of going alone, and appeared to pay no attention to wealth and honours.

Lorenzino took the Duke privately to his house, on the night of the 6th of January 1537, under pretence of meeting a lady, a relation of his, of whom Alexander was deeply enamoured. When he got him to the chamber, he fastened the door, and drawing his dagger, stabbed him to the heart. This ferocious act is related by Varchi, in his fifteenth book, and also by Segni

in his seventh, but both these writers suppose the event to have taken place in 1536.

The crime committed by Lorenzo was rendered worse than useless: he himself fled like a madman to Venice, while the party of the Medici soon prevailed over the weak divided friends of the Republic. Cosmo was elected Duke of Florence, on the 9th of January following, and exercised his power with justice and moderation. Lorenzo after residing some time at Constantinople went to France, and thence to Veince in 1547, where he was assassinated by two soldiers, who would take no reward, as one of them had been among the guards of the Duke Alexander.

There is an affecting letter of Vasari, describing the above event, which I shall insert.

"TO DON ANTONIO VASARI.

"Behold, honoured uncle, the hopes of the world, the favours of fortune, and the frail support derived from Princes, since the recompense of my great labour and fatigue is vanished like a dream, is brought to an end, and blasted by a breath. Behold the Duke Alexander, my lord on earth, is dead, murdered like a

savage wild beast, by the envy of Lorenzo and Pietro Francesco his kinsmen. I and all his household are dissolved in tears at the unhappy fate of this Prince, whom so many swords, so many arms, so many soldiers, so many guards, and so many fortresses could not defend from one single dagger and two such atrocious traitors. My sorrow is not like that of a great many others, who lament only their own misfortune, and who are too common in a court, which is a continual pasture for flatterers, debauchees, cunning knaves and ruffians, whose only care is themselves. It grieves me to think that this vile deed is not solely the death of the Prince, but also the destruction of all those whom the world most esteem, and that it is an open defiance to God. The misery in which last night was passed by her Excellency and her attendants was only equalled by my own.

"I must own my pride was raised very high by the favours I received first from the Cardinal Hippolito de Medicis, and afterwards from his uncle Clement VII, of both of whom I have been robbed by death. Thus fell all my hopes of ecclesiastical preferment for you, and all my own hope of being able to support my mother, my sisters, and brother; and by means of such great patrons, of obtaining for you the reward

of your virtues and your constant bounty to us, and of seeing you in a station to do honour to us and all our house. And even after their deaths, I had still some hopes of seeing your brother, my uncle Cosmo, in a better situation, and deriving an income from some good place or other, which I might possibly obtain by the services I had done for our late unfortunate Prince.

" I do not grieve for the loss I sustain in my professional capacity, since every court that pays any attention to the arts, will always give bread for ingenious performances; so that when we are deprived by death of one patron, we are sure to find another. My tears are for those who depended on his support, many of whom were of noble blood; and for those who had served him for many years, and had been faithful to him through every thing, and have had the staff of command and government given to them for their services. As to myself, I believe that the same providence, which feeds the birds of the air and the beasts of the field, will also provide continual work for me; and that by the sweat of my brow I shall be able to assist you and the rest of my family. Besides, if I chose to offer my services to his Excellency the Duke Cosmo de Medicis, who has succeeded the un-

fortunate Alexander, I might have the same place and the same provision as before. Therefore comfort yourself, and do not be in any doubt about me; I will send the picture of St Roque I have done for the convent, as soon as possible. I have sawn the picture in two at the middle, and shall leave it to them to rejoin it. I am greatly annoyed about the other picture I have undertaken, that is to be placed at the side of the high altar of St Dominic; for I am also engaged by the monastery of the *Corpus Domini,* to do a picture for them within a twelvemonth. If I do not succeed in procuring two wooden pannels for those two pictures here, I shall go to Rome, where I have been earnestly invited these many years by a multitude of friends. Besides this, my heart is bent on improving myself in the art.

" Pray to God, my dear Uncle, to preserve me with whole ribs, for I swear that all of us who were in the service of the late Duke are in the greatest danger of our lives. As for myself, I have retired to my chamber, and have removed all my things into the houses of various friends, to take care of them for me, so that I may be enabled to pass the gate without incumbrance.

" I am about a picture, the subject of which is Christ converting the bread and wine into his

own flesh and blood. I have finished the Christ, and begun the Twelve Apostles; and that I may be in readiness to go, I shall do but little else, and finish it soon, to leave as a present to the magnificent Octavian at my departure. As Christ, when he parted from his apostles, left a record to them as this picture represents, so I leave this sign of my good will and gratitude on leaving the court to retire to a better life.

"I have ordered a case for the pictures, so that I may comfort myself with having made my peace with you and the rest at Arezzo. Please to get my house in readiness for me; I shall soon arrive, and hope to spend the rest of my days there in peace.

"GEORGIO VASARI.

"Florence, Jan. 7th, 1537."

"TO MARTIN NICHOLAS SERGUIDI.

"Behold, my honoured friend Nicholas, after all my good fortune, and no less state of great danger, more by my fate than by my will, I am thus quickly returned to my own country, Arezzo, but not without some difficulty. Here, by the charity of my mother, the amiable kind-

ness of Don Antonio, my uncle, the sweetness of my sister, and the friendship which every one in the city shews me, I am made to feel more keenly the galling chain of servitude we suffer in a court, the ingratitude, the cruelty, the vain hopes, the contagious poison of nauseous adulation, in short, all the miseries that are attached to it, and death seems the only means by which we can escape it. For when a delinquent has, by the mercy of God, been once set at liberty, if he again commits the same crime, he not only deserves the punishment of corporeal death, but of eternal or worse, if worse there be. So I have lost a servitude which I acquired in my boyish days, and my pride and grandeur encreased with my improvement in my art. But never again will I undertake any thing, except where I have the perfect liberty of my own mind, and am not subject to another's caprice; for this is the truest grandeur and the safest hope. If youthful vanity or avarice has sown in us the seeds of inclination to bow down and subject ourselves, either through frivolity of mind or avarice or ambition or desire of praise, all these things when gained involve us in deeper misery than even the end so eagerly sought can atone for. I return you ten thou-

sand thanks for your mature counsel, now that I am freed from those enemies to God and happiness.

" You are perhaps aware that I enjoyed the patronage of the great Hippolito de Medici, and Pope Clement VII, and that I had considerable hopes, that by means of one or the other, I should have been able to afford some assistance to my family. Being deprived of both of these by death, the light of my hopes was so far kindled, as to induce me to pay my devotions to Duke Alexander, by whom I was received into favour, and was so little able to govern myself, that I became blinded by pride and conceit, which is perhaps the reason that I am now made an example of; and not only myself, but all the others who were in his service now feel the same unhappiness, and how little certainty attends the hopes of those who rely on the favour of the great. I am quite in earnest, and assure you that I am now become perfectly insensible to the things of this life. I know myself thoroughly; and were it not for some little talent I have shown, I should have no hope remaining in this world. But when I consider that I have a heavy weight upon me, one unmarried sister, without any provision for my mother, an aged uncle, and a brother, it is

purely through my desire of assisting them that I have been prevented from putting an end to myself with the dagger or by poison. Behold me then resolved to live always by the sweat of my brow, and to labour continually for any one who will employ me; and if they come not to my house, I will go to theirs, let it be where it will; and thus placing all my confidence in God, occasion pictures to be bespoke by those who never delighted in them.

"The study of the art I shall practise in this place, as an example of forbearance to those who strive to be courtiers; by which means I shall less offend my God, my neighbours, and myself. My solitude I have in exchange for the society of that herd of men, who, to get themselves patronised, are obliged to be all submission, admiration, and praise, and must dance perpetual attendance. But here I pass my time in reading and contemplating the Deity, without sin, and without offending my neighbours with malicious scandal. The village is my resource when melancholy; and to view the rural prospect, morning and evening, so soothes my mind, that, next to God, I am indebted to it for the tranquillity I enjoy. Now mind that the breaking of my long silence to you is to put an end to all your persuasions to

a change of my situation, to barter liberty for slavery, humility for pride, and now that I am whole, to make me become weak again. But enough of this. I proceed to answer your enquiries as to what I am at present engaged upon. I have now finished the St Roque, and have engaged with that brotherhood to paint the front of their chapel and all the ornaments; in which I have painted in compartments, under the St Roque, a design of the Plague when David numbered the people, and the Prophet Nathan was sent to him, saying, 'You have sinned against God, who will punish you; you have therefore to make choice of either famine, pestilence, or exile.' These I have represented in this manner: Famine is a starving, meagre figure in the air, with stalks of corn without the seed in her hand, leading a hungry wolf. Exile I have pourtrayed by a King running away from his people, who are pursuing him. Pestilence is signified by a serpent flying in the air, pouring forth fire and noxious vapour. The sky flashes with thunderbolts; and there is a horn filled with poison, which with its smoke and stench spreads desolation around. In another part you see the Destroying Angel of the Lord, darting vengeance on the people, who are falling dead upon the ground; which fills David with

compassion, and he prays to the Lord that vengeance might fall upon himself alone, who was the sinner, and not on the people. This stops the hand of the angel of the Lord, and the scourge ceases. David buys the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, where he raises an altar to the Lord, and there offers up sacrifice. I have also, in the cieling, painted in small dimensions the history of Moses; and below that, the figures of St Peter and St Paul, larger than life. In the front of the chapel, over two doors, is a tabernacle or recess, and for each I have done a prophet, seated, accompanied by children. In the great front, over each prophet, is a figure: one is Charity, with children round her on their knees; the other is Hope, lifting her eyes towards heaven, with her hands joined in prayer, in expectation of the reward for her labours; and above the arch, in the middle, is a figure of the Christian Faith, with a vase, in which is a newborn infant, who being baptised with water, is made a Christian. At her side are to be the emblems of the other sacraments of the church, and in her hand is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. My abilities seem to give perfect satisfaction to my countrymen. I shall now soon have finished my work at this place, and

when I have done what I have promised for them, I shall look about for myself. Therefore, as you see I get work, do not talk to me any more about the court.—I am yours,

"GEORGIO VASARI.

"Arezzo, July 6th, 1537."

"TO MASTER BACCIO RONTINI.*

"I am under great obligations to you, my dear Master Baccio, as you know that by your skill, under the mercy of God Almighty, you at one time saved my life, and at another time restored me to health. You desire to know whether I am dead or alive, because you have not had any knowledge of my existence, either by powder or smoke. You now see my answer, informing you that I am at this time shut up in my room making a design for a picture that is to be placed here in Arezzo, over the high altar in the church of the monastery of the *Corpus Domini*. Since I parted from you, I have been so very melancholy about the death of Duke Alexander, that it nearly drove me mad. So to divert my chagrin, and to keep my thoughts from distraction, I undertook

* A celebrated physician of that time.

this work, the subject of which is Christ taken down from the cross by Nicodemus. There are four figures who, with great difficulty and care, have unnailed the body of our Lord; one man has his arms round the middle, bearing the greatest part of the weight; another takes the right leg at the knee, and helps to support the other parts as a counterpoise; another holds the left arm, descending like the other two, who have begun to move down; another man has placed a ladder against the cross, and is wrapping the body in a long piece of drapery round the middle: holding one end of it in his hand, he lowers down the body very gently, and supports part of the weight. The other part of the drapery is thrown over the cross. One man below is supporting the dead body with his hand, and receiving it from those above.

"Thus all the figures are assisting to take down the body of their Saviour, and to give him a sepulchre more honourable than his death. The Madonna, overcome by grief, has fallen senseless on the earth. Mary Magdalen and the other two Marys are all in tears, and plunged in the deepest sorrow. St John,* unable to endure the sight of this impious

* He should have said Joseph of Arimathea.

sacrifice of our Lord and of the fainting Mother, and yet unwilling to discover his tears, turns away his face, and with both his hands raised to his head, he stoops forward, as if trying to abate the bitterness of his grief. There are also the centurions on horseback, who after seeing the body laid in the sepulchre, consign it to the soldiers of Pilate. The sky is darkened by the eclipse of the sun. On the north of the mountains in the back-ground is seen a part of the country near Jerusalem.

"Thus while I work on this picture of the pure and righteous Son of God, who for our salvation was most vilely put to death, I, fully confiding in that divine mystery which gives hope and comfort to my soul, shall moderate my afflictions, and be humbly content to live in this my quiet poverty. By not suffering any tormenting, vain thoughts to interrupt me while employed in this work, and thus going on without annoyance, I think I shall finish it in a short time. If it be your design, as you intimate in your letter, to come to us at Arezzo, I shall be gratified in the highest degree, for, besides that you will see one who loves you, you would be able to do a great service to my sister, who has a defluxion in her arm, from which probably she would soon be relieved by

that skill, which was given you by God. And there is nothing that is in my power to do for you, that you have not a claim on me to perform, and to help you more than your own Galen or Dioscorides.

"Therefore to you I have dedicated ten drawings of various herbs by my own hand, coloured exactly from nature, just like those which I did before. I shall be much obliged, if when you come, you would bring with you that book of the bones and anatomy, which I gave you the last year, because it will serve me here a little, not having advantage at this place of the dead body, as we had at Florence.

"Wishing you health, I remain yours more than ever I was, and with this I shall conclude my letter.

"GEORGIO VASARI.

"Arezzo, February 1537."

"TO MASTER GIOVANNI POLLASTRO.

"If every disease were as well understood by the physicians, as you most accurately comprehended mine, I believe that death would have but little power over the human race. Behold me a lost and dispirited man in Arezzo, become

desperate from trouble for the death of Duke Alexander, disliking all commerce with mankind, dull to the kindness of a parent or the tender solicitude of my family, I was a melancholy object, shut up in my chamber, attending to nothing else but my work; yet my work itself seemed to distract my brain. At last I became so ill at one time, that I was really out of my senses, and my imagination was filled with horrid dreams which had so infected my intellects, that I verily believe that had I persevered long in the same course, in a short time it would have brought me to an untimely end. But it was you, my dear Master Giovanni, (blessed be God for it a thousand times) it was by your means that I was conducted to the Hermits of Camaldoli,* and it was impossible for me to have been conducted to a fitter place to bring me to my proper senses, because I passed my time in a way that did me infinite service; for by communing with those holy hermits, they, in the space of two days, worked such an alteration in my mind for my good and my health, that I began to be sensible of my former folly and the madness with which I had been blinded. But now, in this chain of lofty

* The principal hermits of that religious order in Tuscany.

mountains of the Apennines, beautified by the straight fir-trees, it is that I am made to feel the high value of a life of peace. Every year these holy hermits make a hut of the branches of trees, with a cross fixed to it, pointing straight to heaven. This they imitate in their lives: and here they have their abode together, leaving the vain world below them with a fervent spirit elevated to God. Thus striving at perfection, they are continually approaching nearer to it. Here are no temptations from the wickedness and vanities of the world; and although we may treat them with derision, exposed as they are to the blowing of the winds and battering of the tempest, which often assails them, yet afterwards, when the air becomes clear, they find themselves more alert, more healthy, more hardy, and more perfect than ever; as they know to a certainty, that Heaven, which gave them their constancy and their faith, ever gives the same resigned spirit to all who serve the Lord.

"I have seen and conversed for an hour with five old hermits, neither of them under eighty years of age, and who are strengthened to perfection by the Lord; and it seemed to me as if I had heard the discourse of five angels of Paradise. It quite astonished me to see those

men at such an infirm age work in the freezing nights like young men, to remove the snow that rose high about the fence which surrounded their cells, in order that they might be able to go to church in the morning or at any hour of the day, thus clearing the way for the space of a hundred and fifty paces from the fence of their cells, and all this done with a joyfulness and pleasure as if they were going to a wedding. Here reigns such silence amidst those mute brethren, that one fears to draw one's breath, and the very leaves of the trees seem not to dare to stir with the wind : even the water that is conducted by wooden troughs to the whole hermitage, carrying it from one cell to another, runs so exquisitely clear that it seems to pay a wonderful respect. It gave me pleasure to find to every cell a walk of about twelve paces, and also a little study to read, write, or contemplate in; and near it the bed and a little table, and a window that projects forward like the rota or wheel in a nunnery, a narrow opening, at which the lay-brother puts in the pittance to the hermit who takes his meal at his own time, and having made his dinner, sets the empty platter in the same place to be taken away, and the same person who brought it removes it silently, without a word ever passing.

"There is a good provision of wood for fire, both for winter and summer: a little chapel ornamented with subjects of piety, for the private devotions and meditations of any despairing soul.

"Added to an infinite number of accommodations, there is a convenience for washing their linen, and a most beautiful garden, which affords very great comfort, and which they much enjoy. Therefore you may imagine the satisfaction it affords to those who see it.

"It is the desire of these holy hermits that I should paint a picture for the high altar, and the whole front of the chapel, down as far as the partition in the church, where there are a multitude of ornaments and figures done in fresco; and afterwards, I am to paint two pictures to be placed at the gate, which leads into the choir. I am at present about one of these, to show to the Reverend Father Abbot, that he may judge what I am able to do; for it seemed to him that I was very young, considering the character he had heard of me. But I hope by the help of God to execute a work that would not disgrace me if I were an older and more experienced artist. I have already finished the sketch, though it was no longer ago than the day before yesterday in the evening, that he

gave me the commission to make the design for one of those middle pictures, pointing out the subject. The same night, fired by the desire I had to surprise and give him satisfaction, I finished my sketch ; and at an early hour in the morning took it to the Reverend Father Abbot, who seemed lost in astonishment at seeing it, saying that if he had not known that he had given me the order himself, he should have verily believed that I had brought it with me to the Hermitage already done. We have agreed upon the price, and at this time I have begun the work; when I have finished it, I will let you know. I have now told you every particular. I am perfectly comfortable with these fathers.

" I am, yours,

" Georgio Vasari.*

" From the Hermitage of the Camaldoli."

* All these paintings of Vasari's are still in being, and have been well preserved, and are the best works he ever did.

CHAPTER XIII.

TITIAN EMPLOYED BY CHARLES V.—HIS PORTRAIT OF THE MARQUIS DEL GUASTO.—FINDS A RIVAL IN PORDENONE.

The visit made by the Emperor Charles to Bologna in 1530, brought about an event of the first importance in the history of the arts in Spain; I mean the introduction of the works of Titian, and some time after a journey of Titian himself into that country. At the period when Charles made his entry into Bologna, Titian was in the full lustre of his fame; scarce a character of eminence in Europe but was to be found pourtrayed on his canvas; and to be delivered down to posterity in the glowing colours of his pencil was an object of general ambition, and in some degree an anticipation of immortality.

Charles, though not very cordially attached to his Spanish subjects, nor ever partial to that country, cultivated notwithstanding the genius

of its painters; and this he effected not only by sending them to study under Italian masters, but also by inviting the latter into Spain. The splendid example of Titian might have been alone sufficient to illuminate a kingdom: and there were many others of no mean pretensions. Julio and Alexandro, Italians of the school of John of Udina, a disciple of Raphael, were artists of great distinction. Charles engaged them in a royal work, the beautifying the Alhambra of Grenada; they also enriched the hospital of Santiago, in the city of Ubeda, with many noble paintings; and the famous Duke of Alva found various other employment for their talents.

The Emperor, as I before observed, sat to Titian as he passed through Bologna. He was then in the meridian of life; and though he could not be said to inherit the beauty of Philip the Handsome, he was nevertheless of a majestic, comely aspect; the portrait pleased him well, and though so weak an ingredient as vanity was not to be found in Charles's composition, yet he was not insensible to outward impressions, and henceforward determined never to trust the representation of his likeness to other hands than those of Titian. He was a lover of the arts, not an enthusiast; he knew

the value of their influence; and reverenced them for their power without being captivated by their charms. To men of talent he was liberal without familiarity: in short, his sentiments in this, as in every other instance, were directed by reason, not hurried away impetuously by constitution or passion. He rewarded Titian for his portrait with a thousand golden *scudi*, consulting therein no less his own magnificence, than the artist's merit: and he also gave him two hundred ducats for a small picture, the subject of which is not stated.

Titian, at the time that he was sent for to Bologna, not only drew the portrait of Charles the Fifth and the Cardinal Hippolito de Medicis, but likewise was commissioned by the Emperor to paint several other pictures for him. He at the same time drew the portrait of Alfonso d'Avalos, Marquess of Guasto, and his friend Peter Aretin, by whose means he was made known to and gained the favour of Frederic Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, whom he accompanied back to his own state, where he painted his portrait and that of his brother the Cardinal. After having finished these, he ornamented a room between those which had been painted by Julio Romano for the Duke. Here he represented the twelve Cæsars half-length,

rather larger than life, taken partly from medals and partly from antique marbles, These, says a contemporary author, are of such exquisite perfection, that vast numbers go to that city only to see them, thinking that they see the Cæsars themselves and not their portraits. Giulio Romano afterwards painted a story from the life of the Cæsars under each of the pictures.

Of the persons above-mentioned whose portraits are handed down by Titian, some particulars may be acceptable. Alfonso d'Avalos, Marquess of Guasto or Vasto, succeeded to the immense riches, as well as to the reputation of the great Ferdinand d'Avalos, Marquess of Pescara. He had just returned at the time we speak of, from the expedition to Tunis, where he had served as Lieutenant-General under the Emperor. To fine military qualities he added lofty but generous manners; and a cool calculating mind, equal to any undertaking. When Governor of Milan, he caused two of the Ambassadors of Francis the First to be assassinated on their way to Venice and Constantinople, in order to possess himself of their instructions and traverse their designs. War being on this declared, in the famous battle of Cerecola, he was seized with such a panic of

falling into the enemy's hands, that he lost the victory by retiring precipitately in the early part of the day. He did not long survive his fame, dying in his forty-second year.

The Marchese Frederic Gonzaga was a valiant commander and liberal patron of the arts. He received his dukedom in 1530, from Charles the Fifth. Julio Romano was introduced into his service by Balthazar Castiglione in 1524. He was here very fortunate, but at the same time narrowly escaped the just vengeance of the Pope for designing a series of immoral prints, engraved by Marc Antonio, and accompanied by the licentious sonnets of Aretin. Ercolo Gonzaga, brother to the above, bishop of Mantua, and made a cardinal in 1527, was one of the brightest ornaments of the church in the sixteenth century. Being of an elevated genius and excellent disposition, he not only made a rapid progress in literature and the arts himself, but gave them every encouragement in his power; and took singular pleasure in the company of artists and learned men. After the death of Duke Frederic, he was for sixteen years regent of Mantua, during the minority of his nephews.

Titian, on his return to Venice from Bologna,

had the mortification to find that a party of gentlemen-connoisseurs had taken up and patronised Pordenone, bestowing the most extravagant praise on some picture he had painted in one of the public buildings, as also a small picture in a part of the church of St Giovanni Eleemosynario. This by accident brought him into an unlooked-for rivalry with Titian, who had but a short time before painted for the same church a picture of St Giovanni Eleemosynario attired like a bishop; but the power of execution to be found in this picture throws the work of Pordenone to an immeasurable distance behind it. Indeed there can be no comparison made between them.

How exactly we find the same thing in our days, when scarcely a year passes but we are called upon to bestow our wonder and attention on some new and surprising genius, who makes a prodigious noise for a season, and then is heard no more! The earnest desire of mankind for novelty, and the pleasure it gives to those who fondly hope they have had the sagacity to bring the hidden treasure to light, tempts them to decry the most established reputation, and leads them to suppose that their new-discovered favourite may supply the vacant place,

the frequent failures they experience being passed over without making them wiser.

Of so formidable a rival of Titian, I shall here give a short account. The original name of this eminent master was Giovanni Antonio Licenio, which he changed for that of Regillio; but he is generally called Il Pordenone, the name of a small town in Friuli, where he was born in 1484. He discovered an early propensity for the art of design, and was sent to Udina, where he studied the works of Pelligrino di San Daniello. Having attained a respectable degree of proficiency, he went to Venice, where he formed an intimacy with Giorgione, of whom he became the friend rather than the disciple, as has been sometimes asserted. With still less probability can he be supposed to have been a fellow-student with Titian under John Bellino, as stated by Count Rinaldio in his *Pittura Friuliana*. The other followers of the style of Giorgione acquired something of his manner; but Pordenone is said by his admirers to have adopted his very mind and the grandeur of his conceptions; than which it would be difficult to produce any thing more elevated, bold, and original in the Venetian school.

After a residence of some years at Venice, he

returned to his native town, where he painted in 1515, for the Collegiate-Church, his picture of the Holy Family with St Christopher; and soon afterwards for the church of St Peter Martyr at Udina, the Annunciation, an admirable picture; which has since been considerably damaged and retouched. He then returned to Venice, where he painted his well-known picture of St Lorenzo Justiniani with St Agostino and St Giovanni Battista, one of his finest pictures in oil. The celebrity of this performance and others brought his talents into comparison with those of Titian, who is said to have conceived some apprehensions at his success, and to have expressed no little indignation at being put on a level with Pordenone. This jealousy was also aggravated by the latter's being commissioned by the convent Degli Angeli, at Murano, to paint a picture of the *Annunciation*, instead of one by Titian, which had been rejected on account of the exorbitant price demanded for it. These animosities proceeded to such a length, that Pordenone thought it prudent to guard against violence, and is said to have painted his frescos in the cloisters of St Stephen with his sword by his side, and his shield laid near him, like the bravos of that time. This state of open hostility, so little congenial with the disposition of Porde-

none, occasioned his quitting Venice; and he visited Mantua, where he painted the façade of the Palazzo Cæsarie. Thence he went to Placenza, where he was employed to paint a picture of St Augustin, in the tribune of *S. Maria di Campagni;* and two chapels in fresco. In one of these he represented the *History of St Catherine*, and in the other the *Nativity*, and the *Adoration of the Magi*. Cremona, Treviso, and Parma successively received the benefit of his labours. At length he returned to Venice, where he was immediately employed to paint the cupola of St Roque, one of his most considerable undertakings. In this he represented God the Father with angels in heaven; also the four Evangelists and the four doctors of the church, which gained him great applause. And in the large niche over the altar he introduced the *Transfiguration*, with the Prophets and Apostles. The fame of Pordenone reached Germany, whither he was invited by Charles V, who employed him to paint the Grand Saloon at Prague, and some emblematical subjects representing the *Cardinal Virtues*. These performances were highly esteemed by the Emperor, who remunerated him with great liberality; and conferred on him the honour of knighthood. His last works were his Cartoons designed for a series of tapestry,

undertaken for Ercolo, the second Duke of Ferrara, and describing the labours of Hercules.

Pordenone, though not equal to Titian, holds an elevated rank among the painters of his country, Less tender in his tones and less seductive in his contours than the head of the Venetian school, he at least rivals him in the energy of his style and the boldness of his execution. His fresco works are preferable to those in oil; though he arrived at great excellence in both. To a grand character of design he added the rich and glowing colouring of Giorgione. He was more successful in the robust and muscular delineation of men than in the softness and delicacy of female forms. In every thing he exhibited a daring and vigorous mind. He was an experienced and expeditious workman; and delighted in fore-shortening and in terrible situations, having no fear of encountering the most arduous difficulties of the art. In his works at Venice he seems to have surpassed himself. There is a Mercury in the front of the house of Talente that is very well fore-shortened; a battle-piece and a horse, which are much commended; and a Proserpine in the arms of Pluto, which is a most elegant figure. The rivalship or rather enmity which existed between him and Titian appears to have acted as a spur, which contri-

buted to the excellence of both, like the competition between Buonarotti and Raphael; to which it bears a further similarity, as the one is distinguished by energy and gravity, and the other by elegance and grace. To have contended with Titian for the prize of Fame, is no ordinary claim to glory; and it will be considered highly honourable to the reputation of Pordenone that he is entitled to the second rank in the Venetian school, at a period when it was so fertile in able artists. He died at Mantua, in 1540, aged fifty-six, and was strongly suspected to have been poisoned.

It was indeed necessary that Pordenone should have been possessed of great qualities, having to contend with Titian, to whom, after all, he was much inferior. Nor is it any wonder, since in Titian alone (be it said without disparagement to other painters) are collected together almost all the excellences of the art, which are found dispersed in so many others. As to invention and design, very few have ever exceeded him. In colouring none ever was his equal. To Titian alone must be given the palm of perfect colouring. For it is highly improbable that the ancients could have attained it, being confined in their mode of execution. But if they did colour well, it has always been wanting in a

greater or less degree among the moderns. It may be said of Titian that he almost equalled Nature herself; and that his figures seem to move, breathe, and live.

Titian did not indulge in any vain or ostentatious display, but aimed at a propriety of colouring; there are no affected ornaments, but the modesty of nature given with a master's hand: there is no crudeness, but the tender pliancy of real flesh. In his pictures the lights always contend with the shades; and diminish and lose themselves in the same manner as in nature. Such was the painter that Pordenone dared to enter into competition with.

Pordenone had also two relations, both of whom gained great credit as painters. The first was Julio Licenio da Pordenone. He was the nephew and scholar of Gio. Antonio Licenio, and was born at Pordenone in 1520. He distinguished himself as an historical painter, particularly in fresco. He resided great part of his life in Germany, where he left many proofs of his ability, especially at Augsburg. He etched some plates from his uncle's designs.

The other was Bernardino Licenio da Pordenone. He was a relation of his celebrated name-sake, and from the resemblance of style discernible in his pictures at the *Conventuali* at

Venice, may be presumed to have been his scholar. He was an eminent painter of portraits, which so nearly approach to those of Pordenone himself as to be frequently attributed to that master.

The great defect in the character of Titian seems to have been that perpetual jealousy that annoyed him, of which there are so many instances given that we cannot but conclude it was the truth. Wherever he found more than common ability, he became an enemy. Such was not the character of Raphael or of Michael Angelo: and it was to this difference of character that we probably owe the superior grandeur and refinement of their ideal conceptions. Every man's genius pays a tax to his vices.

CHAPTER XIV.

TITIAN'S SCHOLARS—PARIS BORDONE.

Though a great many studied under Titian, yet there were but few who attained to any great eminence. Numbers attempted his manner with more or less success; but amongst his other pupils there was one Giovanni Fiamingo, who in the representation of the human figure, either large or small, was considered a great master; in portrait he was truly excellent, as may be seen by many of his pictures in Naples, where he lived for some time. He died young. There is extant by this man (what will for ever do him honour) a set of anatomical designs, that have been engraved and published by that most excellent engraver Andrea Vesalio in his works. However the best of all the followers of Titian was Paris Bordone, who was born at Treviso; his father being of that country, his

mother a Venetian. He was at eight years of age sent to Venice, to the care of a relation. Here he learnt grammar, and became an admirable musician. He next placed himself under the tuition of Titian; but did not continue long with him, as he perceived that he had not the method of improving his scholars in the art of design; nor was he much inclined to assist any promising youth, in whom he might hereafter raise up a rival. It grieved him much that Giorgione was no longer living, whose manner he held in the highest admiration, and whose advice he had hoped to receive. For as to Titian, although earnestly begged and even implored to communicate his knowledge, it was lost labour. He therefore gave himself entirely up to study, and to imitating the works of Giorgione; and this he did with so much success as to gain great credit; and at the age of eighteen he was commissioned to paint an altar-piece for the church of St Nicolo dei Frati Minori; which circumstance coming to the knowledge of Titian, he attempted by every means he could devise to have the work taken out of his hands, or else to throw such difficulties in his way as might prevent his displaying before the public his early genius, or even to gain a little money. This certainly is a very heavy charge against

Titian, and bears too much an appearance of truth.

After this, Paris Bordone was sent for to Vicenza, to paint a history in fresco, in the Loggia of the hall of Justice, where he went with much good will, and painted his picture, which is at the side of that by Titian of the *Judgment of Solomon*. His is the subject of Noah and his children, which for careful finishing, correct design, and sound sense, is thought not in the least inferior to its companion. Indeed, to say the truth, they are so equal in merit, that they appear as if they had been both executed by the same hand.

At his return to Venice, Paris was employed to paint in fresco certain naked figures at a place near the Rialto: and these being approved of, he was called upon to paint the fronts of several palaces in Venice. Afterwards he was sent for to Treviso, where he likewise adorned several fronts of houses, and did other works, and in particular, a great many portraits that gave the highest satisfaction: such as that of the Magnifico M. Alberto Unigo, that of M. Marco Serarville, of M. Francisco da Quer, of the Canonico Rovere, and Monsignor Alberti.

For the cathedral of that city, he painted a picture in the middle of the church (at the instance of the Signor Vicario) of the Nativity of our Lord, and near it, one of the Resurrection. In the church of St Francis, an altar for the Cavalier Rovere, and an altar in St Girolamo; and also in All-Saints-Church an altar-piece with a great number of Saints, both male and female; the heads very fine, with great variety in the attitudes and costume.

He painted an altar in St. Lorenzo, and in St Paul's he painted three chapels. In the principal one he painted the Resurrection of Christ (the figures the size of life) in which is introduced a multitude of Angels. In the second, some Saints appear surrounded by a number of Angels; and in the third is seen Christ in the Clouds, with the Virgin presenting St Dominic to him, all which works proved him to be a man of great talents, and gained him very high commendation in this his native city. In Venice also, where he principally dwelt, he at divers times painted many other pictures; but that which was esteemed to be his best, and most worthy of particular notice and praise, was a history (in the school of

St Mark) of *St John and St Paul.* In this is represented the ceremony of the Fisherman presenting to the Signiory of Venice the Ring of St Mark. In this are seen seated the whole Senate, with the Doge at their head. A great many portraits are introduced, painted from the life excellently. The beauty of this work, so well coloured in fresco, was the cause of the artist's being employed by a multitude of noblemen. In the Grand Palace of the Foscari di San Barnaba, he painted many pictures; amongst which was one of Christ delivering the Holy Fathers out of Purgatory, which is considered very fine. In the church of St Job, on the canal Rejo, he painted a very fine picture of St John in Bragola: and another, in the same church, of the Virgin Mary in Heaven with St Marina. But Paris Bordone found by daily experience, that whoever was very successful in Venice must be subject to great servility and pay homage to all sorts of people; and being of a quiet and modest disposition, unfit for the intrigues of a great city, he resolved to take the first opportunity fortune might offer him, of removing to some distant place; yet not like a strolling painter in want of work, but in honourable employment. Ac-

cordingly, in the year 1538, he went to France, in the service of Francis the First.* Here he painted a great many portraits of ladies of rank, besides many other pictures. Thus for Monsignor Guise, he painted a picture for a church, that was much admired, and one, a Venus and Cupid, for his gallery. Among the rest, for the Cardinal of Lorrain he painted an *Ecce Homo*, a *Jupiter and Io*, and many others. He sent the King of Poland a most excellent one of *Jupiter and a Nymph*. Two very fine ones he sent into Flanders, one a *Mary Magdalen in the Desert, accompanied by Angels;* and the other, *Diana with her Nymphs at the Bath.* These two he painted for Il Candiano, a Milanese, and physician to Queen Mary, to be presented to her Majesty. For the Armourers' Company he painted a large work to be placed in their hall, for which he received the value of three thousand crowns. He painted for the Chief Magistrate of a town in Flanders a large picture, in which he very ingeniously intro-

* Francis the First, in 1540, inhabited the palace of the Louvre, where several of Paris Bordone's pictures are to be seen. It had been the abode of Charles the Fifth, during his stay in France; and besides the members of the Royal Family, the King of Navarre, Madame d'Estampes, the Constable, and the Cardinal de Tournon resided there.

duced the five orders of architecture in perspective; and another for the chamber of the Cardinal d'Augusta. In Cremona, he painted for the church of St Augustin two pictures, in one of which he drew the portrait of Signor Julio Manfrini, as St George, in complete armour.

In the same city he painted many pictures in the Civitate di Belluno, which are much praised, particularly one of the Virgin Mary, and another of St Joseph, which are indeed very fine. He sent to Genoa the portrait he had painted of Signor Octavian Grimaldi, the size of life; and along with it a fine picture of the same size, the figure of a naked female. After this Bordone went to Milan, and painted for the church of St Celsus a picture in which are Angels and Saints seated on clouds, and below a most beautiful landscape. This, it is said, was by order of the Cardinal Charles Boromeo at Rome (the same who has since been canonized). And in the palace of this Cardinal he painted two large pictures in oil; one, Mars and Venus in the net of Vulcan; the other, King David when he sees Bathsheba in the bath,—curious subjects for the chamber of a Saint. Near these is the portrait of St Carlo himself, and of his dear friend Signor Paulo Visconti; also

several landscapes, not large but very fine. At the same time he painted many stories from Ovid for the Marchese d'Astorga, who carried them to Spain. Likewise for Signor Tomaso Marini he painted many pictures, the subjects of which do not fall within my knowledge.

I have now said enough of Paris Bordone, who having reached his seventy-fifth year, retired to the quiet enjoyment of an easy fortune; working only for his own pleasure or at the request of princes or of his most intimate friends, avoiding all vain ambition or show, and determined not to be allured by appearances from that tranquillity and peace, which alone are of real value (according to his own words) —nor to encourage that pride which will embitter our comforts, and destroy every sentiment of charity. Thus he passed his latter days in perfect simplicity of manners, with a certain goodness natural to him, without subtlety or weakness. He at this period painted a very excellent picture for the Duchess of Savoy, a Venus with a sleeping Cupid. This picture is so admirable, that it cannot be praised above its merits.

CHAPTER XV.

TITIAN SENDS HIS PICTURE OF THE ANNUNCIATION TO CHARLES V.—LETTER OF ARETIN ON THE SUBJECT—PICTURES AT THE SANTO SPIRITO—VARIOUS PORTRAITS.

About this time (1537) Titian had painted for the Church of St Maria degli Angeli at Murano, a most excellent piece of the Annunciation, for which he demanded five hundred crowns; but those for whom it was painted refusing to come up to his price, he, by the advice of his friend Peter Aretin, sent it as a present to Charles V. who was so much pleased with the compliment, as well as with the picture, that he made him in return a present of two thousand crowns, and dismissed a picture by the hand of Pordenone, to give it a place. As it may be some gratification to the curious reader, I shall here insert Aretin's description of this picture contained in his most friendly epistle to Titian on that occasion.

"TO MASTER TITIAN.

"Your judgment was certainly excellent, my dear Friend, in sending the picture of the Queen of Heaven to the Emperor of the Earth; nor could the lofty genius which traces this wonder of art, have chosen a destination more deserving for a composition, which describes or represents the Annunciation. One is dazzled with the refulgence which proceeds from the glory of Paradise, whence the Angels slowly descend in various attitudes on white and brilliant clouds. The Holy Ghost, encircled with the fulness of his glory, so much resembles the dove whose form he has taken, that one almost hears the fluttering of his wings. The rainbow, which overarches the air and discloses the dawn of day, is more natural than that which appears to us after a shower towards the evening. But what shall I say of Gabriel the divine messenger? He fills every part with light, and illumines the dwelling with unexampled splendour. He bends so mildly, with a gesture of reverence, that one is forced to believe that in such a guise he first appeared to Mary. He has celestial majesty in his countenance; and his cheeks tremble with a softness which seems to proceed from the milk of human nature and the life-blood so naturally

expressed in the contrast and the union of your colouring. The head has an air of modesty, notwithstanding the dignity of his commission; his eyes denote the greatest sweetness, and the waving ringlets of his hair seem to fall in the most natural order. The slight vest of yellow-coloured cloth does not take away from the simplicity which envelopes him, and only hides the nakedness without concealing the form, while the zone by which it is confined seems to play in the wind. I never saw feathers to equal those in his wings for variety and softness; and the lily which he bears in his left-hand seems to send forth a fragrance, and shines with extraordinary whiteness. In short, it appears that the mouth from which proceeds this salutation must express it in angelic language with sounds divine. I am silent respecting the Virgin, at first adored, and then consoled by the messenger of God, because you have painted her in so miraculous a manner, that all other eyes must be dazzled by the splendour of hers (so full of serenity and piety) as scarcely to be able to look at her; neither must I at this time, being engrossed by the novelty of this last miracle of your art, praise the story you have painted in the palace of St Mark, in honour of our great Lords, and

to the vexation of those who, being unable to deny your genius, grant you the first place as a portrait-painter; as they grant me that of evil-speaking, as if our works were not to be seen all over the world.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, 9th Nov. 1537."

In the year 1541, Titian painted for the friars of Santo Spirito, in Venice, the picture at the high altar, in which is represented the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles. God appears in the bright glory above; and the Holy Spirit is figured as a dove. But unfortunately this picture, by some mischance, nearly perished in a very short time after it was put up; and after much altercation between Titian and the friars, he had to repair and restore it to the state it is now seen in at the altar. In Brescia he also painted for the church of St Nazzaro five compartments. The central one is the representation of Christ, with the soldiers surrounding the tomb. The four others round this are St Nazzaro, St Sebastian, the Angel Gabriel, and the Annunciation of the Virgin; and below are the Apostles. This group was held by the people of the city to be the best modern picture. In the same year (1541)

he painted the portrait of Don Diego di Mendoza, at that time ambassador from Charles to Venice. This portrait was at full-length, standing; and it now became not uncommon to have a portrait at full-length, after Titian had produced this fine specimen. He also painted, at full-length, the Cardinal of Trent, then in his youth; and another of Peter Aretin, for Francesco Marcolini; but this was not so fine a picture as that which he painted before; and which Aretin made a present of to Duke Cosmo de Medicis, to whom, at the same time, he sent a head of Signor Giovanni de Medicis, father to the Duke. This last portrait was copied from a cast in plaster-of-Paris, that had been taken just after his death, which took place at Mantua, at the time Aretin was there, and who caused the cast to be taken. These two portraits are now in the Duke's collection at Florence,* with a great many other noble pictures. In this year, also, Vasari came to Venice, where he tarried three months; in which time he painted several apartments for Signor Giovanni Cornaro, and some things for the company of the Calza. Sansovino, who was director of the building of the Santo

* At the Palace Pitti.

Spirito, had designed that he should have painted three grand pictures in oil in the apartments leading to the gallery; but Vasari leaving Venice at the time, the work was given to Titian, and he executed a set of pictures that struck with astonishment all who saw them. For having made himself master of the art of fore-shortening, he painted on the ceiling overhead three compartments. In the one is Abraham going to sacrifice his son Isaac; next David slaying Goliah, and then Abel killed by Cain, his brother. At this period Titian painted his own portrait, to leave as a memorial to his children. Aretin, in one of his letters, makes allusion to an historical subject composed by him about the same time.

"TO M. GIAMBATISTA TORNELLO.

"Would to God, my dear friend, that I could feel convinced I possessed those qualities you ascribe to me! Certainly I should rejoice at it, not only as an ornament to myself, but for the good of the age, which really has a great scarcity of persons adorned with the virtues you are so kind as to attribute to me; but as every one dips his fingers in the honey of praise, when presented to him by those who

delight in speaking well of their friends, so I go about collecting with vain-glorious lips that flattery which is given me by your exceeding courtesy. Not having any other means of returning your kindness, I have not failed using every exertion to induce Master Titian to put a finishing hand to the picture, which you will soon have again, retouched with that care and diligence which in truth it wanted ; and which you for his honour desired. He has added to it the protector of your country, armed; and instead of the cherubims, you will see two angels of heavenly beauty and exquisite grace. However, I lament much that I cannot be with him enough to make him satisfy you in deeds, as I try to please you with words. This being the case, I fear you will confess when you receive the picture of the *Nativity*, that it is rather a miniature than an oil-painting; and although I make excuses for him, yet I do assure you that he has a great desire to please you, as you are both an extraordinary architect, and a magnificent gentleman, together with his respect for excellent Messer Girolamo, who is an honour to the medical profession, a credit to Novarro, and a worthy relation of yours.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, August 6th, 1542."

Our artist now painted a portrait (the size of life) of a citizen of Venice, his particular friend, called Sinestri; and another, whose name was Paolo di Ponte. At the same time, he painted the daughter of this person, a beautiful young woman, called *La Signora Julia di Ponte;* she was also Titian's god-daughter. He likewise drew the portrait of La Signora Irene, a maiden lady, very learned, an excellent musician, and with considerable talents for the art. According to Ridolfi, this ingenious lady, whose name was Irene di Spilembergo, was of an illustrious family of Venice, and flourished about the year 1550. Although she only practised painting as an amusement, she applied herself to the study of it with all the zeal of a professor; and is said to have had the advantage of receiving lessons from Titian. Lanzi mentions three pictures by her, representing subjects of sacred history, preserved in the *Casa Maniago;* which, though not very correctly drawn, are coloured with a richness and harmony worthy of the ablest artists of that school. The portrait Titian painted of her is said to have been a most admirable likeness of his noble pupil, with whose family he lived in habits of intimacy. She has the honour of being celebrated by most of the authors of Italy.

There is somewhere a picture by Titian of the *Death of Germanicus,* in which he has concealed the mother's face with a veil, thus imitating Timanthes, who in his famous picture of the *Sacrifice of Iphigenia* has hid the father's face, a circumstance which has been much admired. But this contrivance to avoid a vast difficulty and excellence in the art cannot be resorted to a second time with any credit, as the whole merit of it lies in the originality of the thought.

Titian (now in his sixty-third year) painted a picture for his native place, Cadore, in which he represented the Holy Virgin with St Titian, a Saint of his own family, who was also a Bishop. He has introduced a likeness of himself on his knees behind the Bishop, and supporting the crosier.

CHAPTER XVI.

SENT FOR TO BOLOGNA BY POPE PAUL III.—EMPLOYED BY THE DUKE OF URBINO—PORTRAIT OF THE INFANT DAUGHTER OF SIGNOR STROZZI.

In the year 1543, Pope Paul III visited Bologna and Ferrara. Titian on that occasion came to Court, and painted the portrait of that pontiff; a most excellent work, of which he made a copy for the Cardinal Santa Fiore.* For both of these he was most handsomely rewarded by the Pope. There is another copy of this picture in the palace of the Cardinal Farnese at Rome; as well as that belonging to the family of the Cardinal Santa Fiore. In-

* Sforza Sforza, son of Bosio, Count of Santa Fiore, and Costanza Farnese, a natural daughter of Paul III. He was at this time only a youth of sixteen; but had at that period volunteered into the veteran army of Charles V, and afterwards proved one of the first commanders of the age.—Vide Ratti's "History of the Sforza Family."

deed, a multitude of copies were taken from it, which are dispersed all over Italy.

The Pope was so well satisfied that he invited Titian to Rome; but having formed an engagement with Francesco Maria della Rovera, Duke of Urbino, he was under the necessity of declining the offer. Accordingly, he painted the portrait of the Duke of Urbino, a most admired performance, insomuch that his friend Peter Aretin celebrated it in a sonnet, which begins thus—

> "Se il chiaro Apelle, con la man dell arte,
> Rassembra d'Alessandro il volto ed il petto," &c.

There are also in the collection of the Duke of Urbino, two female heads by Titian, which are extremely beautiful; and a young Venus, reposing on a bed with flowers and a thin veil thrown over her, finely painted and highly finished; also a half-figure of Mary Magdalen, with dishevelled hair, a rare work of like excellence. In the same collection are to be seen the portraits of Charles the Fifth, of the French king Francis the First, when young; also the portrait of the Duke Guidobaldo the Second; of Pope Sixtus the Fourth, of Pope Julius the Second, Pope Paul the Third, the old Cardinal of Lorrain, and of Solyman, Emperor of the

Turks: all which are said to be by the hand of Titian, and are extraordinary fine. In the same gallery are a multitude of curiosities; among others an intaglio, on an antique cornelian, of Hannibal, the Carthaginian; also a very fine head, in marble, by the hand of Donato.

In the preceding year Titian had painted a most excellent and admired picture of the infant daughter of Signor Robert Strozzi, a nobleman of Florence. This picture had not been seen by Aretin till the year after, when he wrote Titian the following complimentary letter, which was discovered long after at the back of the picture. The date, 1542, is marked in one corner.

"TO MASTER TITIAN.

"I have seen, my friend, your portrait of the child of Signor Robert Strozzi,* a worthy and excellent gentleman; and as you wish to have my opinion upon it, I will tell you, that if I

* Titian was at this time sixty-three years of age This truly excellent picture is now in the palace of the Dukes of Strozzi at Rome, and is very well preserved. Count Lorenzo Magalotti speaks of it in the highest terms in one of his letters, printed at Florence, addressed to Monsignor Leone Strozzi.

were a painter, I should be in despair; for when I saw it, I thought I ought to possess knowledge almost divine even to comprehend all its beauties. It is certain that your pencil preserves its miraculous powers in the maturity of your age. Therefore, I who am not blind in those matters, swear most conscientiously that I did not believe it possible so wonderful a work could have been so happily accomplished; and that it deserves to be preferred to any picture that ever was or ever will be painted. Nay, should this work of art assert that it is alive, Nature herself might be deceived, and maintain that it was no counterfeit. I must also give due praise to the little dog, that the child is caressing: nor can I say enough of its lively action. I now conclude my letter in a state of astonishment that stops all utterance of speech.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, July 6th, 1543."

Notwithstanding the defects which Titian might have in designing the human figure in a more advanced age, yet he has most certainly represented children more beautifully than any other painter; insomuch that Fiamingo, who took Titian for his model in this respect, has

produced in sculpture figures of children infinitely more natural than any that are to be found in the works of the ancients.

I remember that when I was at Venice in the year 1780, I had the curiosity to visit the house that had been the habitation of Titian; and although great alterations had been made in it since his time, yet there remained fixed in the wall of one of the rooms a *basso-relievo*, in marble, of a group of children extremely graceful and much in his own manner, and which, I was informed, had been his guide and model; but whether it was a modern work or an antique, I cannot say. I think the person who showed the house said it was an antique; but for myself, I have never seen any thing of the sort by the ancients half so beautiful.

Titian certainly gave great satisfaction by his picture of Paul the Third, as is proved by the many copies that have been taken from it: and although it is an exquisite work of art, yet the good sense of the Pope is seen in his approval of it, as it is very evident that there is no flattery in the likeness, which represents him as he was, a little, thin, and rather mean figure, much bent with age, with skinny hands and fingers like a bird's claws. But he has given him an eye of piercing sagacity. Such was the

picture, the merit of which the court of Rome, as well as all Italy, knew how to appreciate; and which, among other testimonies in its favour, produced the following highly flattering letter from Aretin.

"TO MASTER TITIAN.

"Fame, my dear friend, seems to take particular pleasure in proclaiming the wonders of your pencil in the portrait of the Pontiff; how alive it is, how like it is, and how true it is to nature! But fame would very insufficiently have trumpeted forth your praise, had it not been at the same time obliged to publish to all the world the generosity you have shewn in refusing the office of the *Seals of Lead*, which his Holiness wished to give you as a reward for your merit. For all your other works, although divine, are still inferior to this noble act in declining to accept what others would have been but too happy to obtain.

"In not accepting this offered rank, you have not only demonstrated how inferior in beauty and excellence you esteem Rome compared to Venice; but also how much more noble is the secular habit than the vile garb of a friar. Neither my tongue nor pen can sufficiently give praise to your integrity and goodness of heart,

in not wishing to enrich yourself at the expense of two others, for it would have been necessary for you to take part from one and part from another, in order to make yourself their associate. Thus your labour would have been remunerated without any cost to him who is bound to pay for it.*

"Long live Vecelli, since he prizes his good name more than riches or honours!

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Verona, July 1543."

I add the following letter of Aretin to Titian, dated in the same year.

"TO M. TITIAN.

"Your friend and mine, Captain Adriano Perugino, seeing me accidentally when accompanying the Grand-Duke of Urbino, after saluting me as usual, immediately said that he had had the greatest difficulty in the world to induce you to believe what you always concluded to be impossible; namely, that I had been able to absent myself from my terrestrial paradise by persuasion of his Excellency. But I do not

* At this time Sebastian del Piombo possessed the office of Piombare with a partner; and had Titian accepted it, these two must have given up part of their profits to him.

wonder that it seems incredible to you when I myself doubt if I am not in the city I so much admire. Therefore I said to the Cavalier, 'If I can hardly believe it myself, how can you expect that he should?' It is very true, my brother, that the love I feel for the Grand Canal is most excessive. I never put my foot in the stirrup without sighing on recollecting the repose and comfort of the gondola. A fatigued body, a worn-out stocking, and an anxious family are the horseman's portion. So I say, but yet I return here. But if once I get out of this scrape, if once I take the bull by the horns, nothing in the world shall prevent my making a hasty escape. All other places seem like furnaces, hovels, and caverns in comparison with my beloved, most excellent, and adorable Venice. However, forget all your notions imbibed from the times past: and believe my promises as well as you can, that having once bent my knee to Cæsar, I will return to my country with a solemn vow never to depart from it again.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Verona, July 1543."

I can find no other record of the next year (1544) than the two following letters. The first is to Titian from Aretin, in which he describes with much pleasure the picturesque appearance of an evening sky in spring, which he saw at Venice. The other is also from Aretin to his friend, Gualteruzzi, who seems to have been one of the Pope's household, wherein he earnestly intercedes in behalf of his friend Titian, for promoting whose interest he seems never to let slip any opportunity, and who was at that time in expectation of being called to Rome by the Farnese family.

"TO M. TITIAN.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"Having, contrary to my usual custom, supped alone, or rather in the company of this tiresome quartan-ague, which will not permit me to enjoy the taste of any food, I rose from table in despair, as I had sat down to it; and then leaning my arm on the frame of the window, and upon that my breast and the whole of my body, my attention was attracted by the appearance of an innumerable quantity of boats full of people from the country, as well as the inhabitants of the city. I thought at first they were

assembled to be spectators of the Grand Canal, that object of delight to every one; but suddenly I saw an opening was made, when out started two gondolas, in which some famous watermen, well skilled in the management of their oars, came forward and gave great satisfaction to the multitude, who to see this regatta, were gathered in crowds on the bridge of the Rialto, on the banks of the Camerlunghi, in the Peschiera, on the pathway of St Sophia, and in the Casa Mosto. And whilst this crowd, after joyful shouts of applause, were gradually dispersing, each his own way, I who was dissatisfied with myself and did not know in what way to pass away my time, being weary of my own thoughts, and restless in my mind, turned my eyes towards heaven, which, since God created it, had never been embellished with such charming pictures of light and shade. In short, the atmosphere was so resplendent, that desirous to express its colours, I felt envious of your skill, and wished I were you. However, what I saw I will describe to you. In the first place, the houses, though of stone, appeared as if they were composed of some artificial matter. The air was in some places pure and light, in others thick and party-coloured. Consider then the

wonders of this novel scene, with clouds of condensed humidity, which in the principal view appeared to rest half on the tops of the buildings and the other half ascended to the sky; on the right was hanging a greyish or black smoke. I was really astonished at the various colours which displayed themselves in the other quarters of the Heavens. The nearest was lighted up with the splendour of the fiery sun; and in the distance a redder but less resplendent tint appeared, as if that part had not yet acquired its full radiance. Ah! with what lovely pictures does Nature's pencil adorn the air, when remote from palaces! For which reason Vecelli leaves these latter out in making his landscapes. In some places I saw a bluish green; in others a greenish blue, composed by the caprice of Nature, that master of masters; who with light and shade relieves and sets off objects in such a manner that I who know that your pencil is inspired by the soul of Nature, could not help crying out three or four times, 'Oh my Titian, where art thou?' For I am sure that if you had painted what I relate to you, the spectators would have been moved with the same astonishment which I feel, who endeavoured to nourish my soul with contemplating what I

saw, and grieve to think so lovely a picture did not last longer.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, May 1544."

"TO SIGNOR CARLO GUALTERUZZI.

"You, who love Titian yourself, well know how great my friendship for him is, and that I may say I love him more than he loves himself; and I address myself to you, knowing the friendly interest you feel for those who repose the care of their affairs in your hands, trusting to your kind assistance. I therefore feel assured, that my supplications in behalf of this extraordinary man will increase your desire to serve him; and as rain swells the course of a river, so does the confidence that people place in good men increase in their hearts the desire of doing good. But even had you less benevolence, I should have no doubt but that you would pay some attention to what I now write; seeing that he is to visit you with my letters; and depending on the excellence of your disposition, he does not expect that I should move in this affair, to which I am urged by other and foreign reasons. How-

ever, I am well assured that if I had not given you this hint (which I ought to do as a duty) it would not hinder you from acting as your worthy nature prompts. Therefore, you will not rest without endeavouring to promote the benefit of this great painter; and we shall then see you wipe away with the hand of reward the sweat from the brow of Virtue, Labour, and Genius. In short, the great Farnese, now reposing in the lap of Fortune, and having it in his power to benefit all mankind, will not permit so extraordinary a genius to remain unhappy, who has placed all his hopes in him. But I am amazed why it should be necessary to use so many prayers only for the consolation and courtesy of a little bread, which he desires in behalf of his son; who he prays may be sacristan in the Pope's household, as was promised him. But the great revolution of things, which changes the face of the world, may have obliterated from the mind of the Sovereign Pontiff many of those good offices which in other times he in effect had promised, but now may not in the least remember. If astonishing changes did not happen every day, I should be surprised to think that so small a favour as this should be delayed, and to so modest a petitioner. What finer example

can the power of princes offer to those that serve them faithfully than that of a due observance of their engagements? Not only the illustrious Cardinal, not only the divine nephew of his Holiness, but also whoever is nourished by the benefits of this immortal Pontiff is bound to pray him to give what he owes to Vecelli. I give him the epithet 'immortal,' because his sacred portrait * is not only a mirror in which the Holy Father appears as himself to himself, but he there beholds also an heavenly image, which breathes from the style and spirit given to it by the pencil of the painter, that soul and body seem to be there perpetually alive, so that death not knowing how to distinguish the truth of nature from the counterfeit of art, will delay to execute the ordinance of his own privileges, just like one who going in an unknown way, comes to a place with two turnings, and not being willing to wander in the wrong path becomes so confused with taking the counsel of YES and NO, that he doubts at last which is right or which is wrong: and thus perplexed between the two roads, he often wastes his steps only to turn back again.

* Paul the Third, painted by Titian.

"But let no one reproach me for my anxiety in behalf of Titian, whose loyal confidence in me, joined to the graces with which Heaven has adorned him, has converted the kindness of friendship into the tenderness of brotherhood; and even if our affection were as small as it is great, I should be forced to exert myself thus particularly in his favour, because if he remains in oblivion, it will be to the prejudice of the promise of that Paul who maintains so highly the seat of Peter: the zeal for whose honour I am obliged to maintain by the bounty I receive from the splendid liberality of that truly worthy son-in-law of Cæsar, I mean Duke Octavio,* a youth without guile, whose generosity you, Sir, will not fail to remember. I am silent in respect to Bembo, that object of reverence and respect; and I am so that I may not injure him; because his charity ever remembers so well the necessities of his servants, when they place their hopes in his goodness and discretion. Finally, knowing your intimacy with Michael Angelo, that gift of God, I conjure you, as you are familiar with him, to tell him that he surely does not know that I suffer continual

* Duke of Parma, husband of Margaret, a natural daughter of Charles V.

torment by his means, in expecting the designs he promised me, and which I desire not less than I wish to serve him.

" PIETRO ARETINO.

" Venice, June 1544."

CHAPTER XVII.

LETTERS OF ARETIN, TITIAN, AND OTHERS—A LETTER OF TITIAN'S TO CHARLES V.—GIOVANNI DI MEDICIS.

THE subjoined letters will keep up the thread of our narrative, for the year 1545, when Titian was sixty-five years of age, but appears to have been in unimpaired vigour and reputation.

"TO M. TITIAN.

"I meant sooner to have congratulated you upon the shame and blushes with which the Venetian clemency towards you has covered those, who, guided by envy, imagined that the state would not have had so much respect for you as to exempt you from the tax which is now caused by that force of necessity, which is oftentimes occurring in republican governments from the perverse politics of the world. Yet the state, I say, would not exempt you in this

manner, from your extraordinary genius alone, if they did not think it due to you from the honour which redounds to them in your illustrious name. And if I was as much your rival as I am your friend, I should then speaking sarcastically with my usual bitterness, curse your merits and the extreme goodness of their Excellencies, the Signors of Venice, whose prudent munificence, besides being friends and benefactors to virtue, distinguishes and rewards at all times whosoever is worthy of their kindness, to the confusion of those who would have us think otherwise. So that for the favour which God permits you to stand in with them, I thank both God and them: God for his benignity, and them for their kindness. In short, the large pension with which they retain and acknowledge the excellence of art in your person, added to the quantity of imposts from which they have exempted you, proves the sincerity of their Highnesses, and the greatness of your genius; expecting, from the sacred style of your immortal works, that you will leave memorials in the divine circle of this celestial city, such as they desire and such as are worthy of you.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, Feb. 1545."

" TO DANESE, THE SCULPTOR.

" It was a proof of my friendship, and not to give you offence, that I said what truth compelled me to say when I saw the naked figure you have done. I believe I possess the principles and the excellence of a perfect judgment in regard to painting and sculpture. And if we laugh at Nature, who has a reason for all her works, when sometimes she presents to us a man with an enormous head on weak and slender legs, what ought we to do at Art, who having no occasion to go out of her way in what she produces, yet permits her counterfeit figures to fail in the necessary proportions? Titian and Sansovino (Heaven bless them!) have done well: yet they always thank me for giving them hints on their labours, though they are the most extraordinary geniuses in the world.

" But the presumption of knowledge is the common defect of those who know nothing. Therefore, you must pardon your friend, and forgive him for the anger you feel about this matter.

" PIETRO ARETINO.

" Venice, August 1545."

"TO SANSOVINO.

"As soon as ever Titian can paint it with his colours, in order that you, Mr Jacopo, may carve it in marble, I will send you the head of Signor Giovanni, because he who performed so much with his warlike hands, that the learned languages can hardly praise him enough, deserves to have his image revived by the power of your chisel. I do not desire you to give him youth, although death has made his face look old; because I know it is your common custom in every thing you carve. But although he looks to be forty, bear in mind that the noble youth was only twenty-eight. Thus early night cut short the days of the great Giovanni.

"PIETRO ARETINO."

Giovanni de Medicis, father of Cosmo the First, was a famous warrior of that period. It was a cast from his face taken after his death, from which both Titian and Sansovino made their likenesses of him. He was killed in the battle fought at Governolo, a small town in the Mantuan territory, where he received a wound by a musket-ball in the knee, which rendered

amputation necessary; he was conveyed to Mantua, from whence he was distant twelve miles, and where the operation was performed. When he was told that some person must be provided to support him whilst it was done, he took a candle to hold to the surgeon, and said, "Proceed without fear; I need nobody." The fever which followed the loss of his limb carried him off, November 19th, 1526, when he had lived only twenty-eight years. He was buried in the cathedral-church of Milan. The allied powers lost in him an able officer; and Italy one of the best generals she ever gave birth to. In his person he was above the middle stature, and proportionably strong and athletic. None lamented his death more than his soldiers; to express their grief for that event, they assumed a mourning-dress, and even their standards were of the same colour. The Tuscan troops he commanded were called, from this circumstance, "The Black Bands." In 1516 he married Maria Salviati, whom he left a widow with only one child, named Cosmo. He, from the crimes of Lorenzo, his second cousin, and the connections the latter had formed with the republican family of Strozzi, was regarded by the friends of the Medicean interest in Florence,

as having a right to be deemed the head of their party.*

* I find a fuller account of this celebrated person given as follows. Giovanni de Medicis, called "The Invincible," was descended from a brother of Cosmo, "*the father of his country.*" He was born at Forli in 1498, educated under Jacopo Salviati, and wholly devoted to a military life. He commanded in the wars of Romagna for Leo the Tenth; and afterwards fitted out a squadron at his own expense against the Moors; till the conclusion of the League between Charles the Fifth and Leo the Tenth against the French in 1521, placed him at the head of the Pope's cavalry. In the ensuing campaign, in an action under the walls of Parma, and at the passage of the river Adda, Giovanni distinguished himself. Through his discipline and valour, the six bands which he commanded were soon regarded as the finest soldiers of the age. After the death of Leo, he took the command of a body of Swiss in the Florentine service against a threatened attack of the Duke of Urbino; but he could not bring the enemy to action, they not venturing to await his approach. He then returned into Lombardy, and entered into the service of Francesco, Duke of Milan, who was chiefly indebted to him for the signal victory obtained by the Milanese at Abbiategrasso, in 1524.

Through the policy of Clement the Seventh, fearful of the increasing power of Charles the Fifth, and induced by the splendid offers made to him by Francis the First, Giovanni at last accepted a command in the French army; but owing to a wound received in a skirmish, he was absent from the great battle of Pavia. In every subsequent engagement he attracted the admiration of the whole army, till rashly exposing his person in an affair near *Governo sul Mantouano*, he received a wound of which he died in November 1526, being only twenty-eight years of age. Out of grief for his loss, the squadrons he had commanded changed the white ensigns by which they were distinguished for one of uniform black, which obtained for them the appellation of "Le Bande Neri" or "The Black Bands." He married the daughter

There was in this year (1545) a report of Titian's death, as appears by the following letter written by him to Charles the Fifth.

"TITIAN VECELLI, PAINTER, TO THE INVINCIBLE EMPEROR CHARLES THE FIFTH.

"Invincible Prince! if the false report of my death gave any pain or sorrow to your sacred Majesty, to me it has been the source of the greatest consolation, because it makes me more certain that your Highness remembers my humble services, which makes life doubly dear to me. And I most humbly pray our Lord God to preserve me (if no longer) at

of Jacopo Salviati; by whom he had one son, Cosmo, first Duke of Tuscany.

The young Cosmo, in order to ally himself with his Majesty Charles the Fifth, solicited the hand of his daughter Margaret, the virgin-widow of his predecessor, Alexander, Duke of Florence. Charles refused this request, knowing that Cosmo, from interest alone, must prove a sincere ally. To please Pope Paul the Third, he gave her to his grandson, Alexander Duke of Parma, who was at that time only thirteen years old, but who became afterwards so famous for his valour and skill in war; whom surviving, Margaret was entrusted with the Government of the Netherlands for many years. She was uncommonly masculine and coarse in her appearance, but sensible and prudent. She remarked, upon her father's marrying her to the Duke of Parma, that "when a child she had been married to a man, and now she was become a woman, she was given to a boy."

least till I have finished the work I am about for your Imperial Majesty, which is now so near being completed, that in September next, it may appear before your Highness, to whom in the meanwhile I bow with all humility, and reverently commend myself to your gracious favour."

Titian appears to have been still employed in painting for the Spanish Princes in the beginning of the following year.

"TO THE ILLUSTRIOUS AND ONLY TITIAN.

"My dear friend, go on in finishing the portraits of the King of England and his Son,* if it be only that you may be of service to Signor Ludovico D'Allarmi; and my only reason for desiring this of you is on his account alone. For it appears to me that he is going the road to ruin, through the greatness that has made him so proud. Thus the very things which promised to exalt him, have, in fact, been the means of his degradation.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, March 1546."

*This must have been Philip the Second and his son Don Carlos.

CHAPTER XVII.

TITIAN VISITS ROME — HIS WORKS THERE — MICHAEL ANGELO'S OPINION OF THEM—LETTERS OF ARETIN ADDRESSED TO HIM IN HIS ABSENCE.

Titian having accomplished his undertaking at Urbino, he was again invited to visit Rome by the Cardinal Farnese; and arrived in that city in the year 1545. Here he was received in the most distinguished manner, and was lodged in the palace of the Belvidere. At this time he met with Vasari, just returned from Naples to be employed in decorating some magnificent chambers in the Farnese palace, the subjects being chosen from particulars relative to the family of Paul the Third. Vasari had been introduced and recommended to the Cardinal Farnese by Titian; and these two friends went in company to visit whatever was most worthy of notice in Rome. After our artist had reposed himself some days, he felt a desire to begin his work. He was now to

paint Pope Paul again; but the portrait was to be at full-length with the Cardinal and Duke Octavio Farnese of Parma in one group; in which he succeeded to the highest satisfaction of those princes. This picture I saw at the *Capo de Monte* at Naples, and it is indeed one of the very finest examples of portrait in the whole world, particularly in point of the expression which is inimitable. Mr Fuseli, who was then with me, looking at this picture said, "That is true history!"

Titian was then persuaded by the Farnese princes to execute a picture to be presented to the Pope, representing an *Ecce Homo.* This work, when compared with those by Michael Angelo, Raphael, Polidoro, and others, did not seem to the Roman painters of the same excellence, which distinguished many of his pictures, and particularly his portraits. Although it was good in many respects, yet they thought it deficient in dignity of character.

Piero Luigi Farnese, a natural son of Paul III, was the father of the two young men painted by Titian in the same composition with that Pontiff. The titles of Gonfalonier of the Church, Duke of Castro, Marquess of Novara, and lastly, in 1545, Duke of Parma and Placentia, were in a short period conferred

on him. Ungoverned, rash, and dissipated, his contempt of his father's counsels, and his usage of his own courtiers were the cause of his being assassinated by the latter, in the year 1547.

This catastrophe, which is falsely attributed to the *Landi*, owed its origin principally to the imprudence of Piero in not restraining or concealing his antipathy to Charles the Fifth. The Emperor had refused to acknowledge him in his new duchy; and as patron of Milan, laid pretensions himself to the cities of Parma and Placentia, which were renounced by the Church. These cities, after their conquest by Matthew Visconti in 1315, had been given to the Pope, in consequence of a rebellion; and in 1513, had been newly adjudged to the Duke of Milan. Piero, deeply irritated at thus finding himself insecure upon his throne, was continually instigating his father and the Court of France against Charles the Fifth. He, on many occasions, gave great offence to the Governor of Milan, Ferrante Gonzaga; he entered into the conspiracy of Gian Luigi Fieschi against Andrea Doria; persecuted to the utmost the partisans of the Emperor, and proposed to reign by mere force and terror; erecting castles, fulminating confiscations, and depressing generally the whole class (at that time a very powerful one)

of feudatories and nobles. These political errors of Luigi, rather than his personal depravity and ferocity, were the causes, which in a short time drew him to the brink of the precipice, and gave rise to one of the most atrocious conspiracies, which, although executed by his own courtiers, had been contrived in concert with the Imperialists of Milan. It broke out on the 10th of September 1547, about mid-day, and in the citadel of Placentia itself, in which Piero then resided. Girolamo Pallavicini assembled the people in a church of the city; Giovanni Luigi, the Gonfalonier, held the German guards at bay, in the interior of the Ducal palace; Agostino Landi occupied the principal gate; and Giovanni Francesco Anguissola, with a body of troops, seized the Duke in his apartments, killed him with their poinards, and threw his body out of a window. A few hours after, the Imperialists arrived with the Governor of Milan, and took possession of Placentia, in the name of Charles the Fifth. They did not succeed, however, in surprising Parma, which, by the vigilance and loyalty of the garrison, was preserved to Octavio Farnese, son of Piero Luigi. Octavio, although he had in 1538 married Margaret of Austria, the natural

daughter of Charles the Fifth, was not able to obtain the restoration of Placentia from his father-in-law; but, after much trouble, he at length regained it from Philip the Second in 1557, in consequence of his well-timed declaration in his favour against Paul the Fourth, and France; and thus these duchies became reunited. In the time of Piero Luigi it was styled in all acts of state, the Duchy of Parma and Placentia.

Alexander Farnese, also son of Piero Luigi, was created a Cardinal by his grandfather (Paul the Third) in 1534, when only fourteen years of age. He was remarkable for the precocity of his talents: and his conduct at that early age, in the midst of the splendour and luxury and important transactions in which he was engaged, at once gratified the Pope, and justified his opinion of him. Fracastario, Sadoleto, Molza, Flaminio Vettori, and even Charles the Fifth rendered marked testimony to the public and private virtues of the Cardinal Farnese. In 1541, he was sent Ambassador to Francis the First at Paris; and to Charles the Fifth, then at the same place. From that period he contrived to conduct the most weighty and difficult negociations at the courts of those princes.

Towards the close of his life, he gave up his whole time to charitable and religious exercises, and died in 1589, aged sixty-nine.

During the time that Titian was at Rome he received the following letters from his friend Aretin.

"TO TITIAN.

"Though I am very angry with you for taking away the bust of the head of Signor Giovanni* from me, without its being completed by your hand, together with my own portrait rather sketched than finished, yet your letters are still very dear to me; and especially when you tell me of the tears which bathe the eyes of Bembo; and I hope he will soon be restored to that state of health that I, his devoted servant, wish him. And if he is so kind as to shed tears on my account, from only being informed by you of my state of health, I in return am affected in like manner at hearing of his by your letters.

"I do most sincerely and with my whole heart rejoice at the affectionate and most honourable reception you met with from his Holiness the Pope. But it is the peculiar charm of

* Giovanni de Medicis, before-mentioned.

the house of Farnese to be lavish of caresses, which they well know are the parents of Hope. They seem by nature most excellently formed for encouraging the expectations and providing entertainment to please the appetites of those persons who are always ready to feed on promises and who can buoy themselves up with an idea of certain success, even in the lowest state of improbability and doubt.

"I pity you that the whim that has now seized you of going to Rome, did not happen twenty years ago. If you are surprised at its present state, what would you have been, had you seen it in the condition that I left it?* You must know that this great city, in all its calamities, resembles an excellent prince conducted to exile, who, though he has lost his external splendor by the perversity of fate, still preserves the dignity of royal greatness of soul. I now

* The Castle of St Angelo was besieged from the 6th of May to the 5th of June 1527, during which time slaughter and desolation, accompanied with every excess of impiety, rapine, and lust, on the part of the Imperialists, devastated the City of Rome. For this picture of horror I need only refer the reader to the Sacking of Rome, by Guicciardini, by Jacopo Buonaparte, and by Valdes. Clement VII, being distressed for provisions, surrendered the Castle with all its treasures, and remained a prisoner until the 9th of September; when, disguised as a merchant, he fled almost alone to Orvieto, having learnt, though too late, the folly of relying upon military conventions.

expect that in about a month it will be time to hope for your return, which I long for; if it be only to hear what you think of the antique marbles, &c. and in what respect Buonarotti surpasses or is inferior to them, and if you think the ancients had more or less skill in painting than Raphael. I shall enjoy conversing with you about the plots and machinations of Bramante in St Peter's; and the works of all the other architects and sculptors. Pray bear in mind the manner of all the famous painters, and of our Fra Bastiano. In regard to engraving, look well at every intaglio, and do not forget scrupulously to compare the figures of our friend Jacopo* with the statues of those who find fault with him, that we may see if he is blamed with reason. Especially inform yourself of the manners of the court and the courtiers, as well as the arts of the pencil and the chisel. Also attend to the manner of Pierino della Vaga, who is a wonderful genius. But above all, remember not to be so lost in the contemplation of the *Last Judgment*† in the Sistine chapel, as to forget to make haste back,

* Jacopo Sansovino.

† The Last Judgment, painted by Buonarotti in the Pope's Chapel.

that you may not be absent all the winter from me and Sansovino.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, October 1545."

In this letter we perceive the high opinion Aretin held of Pierino della Vaga's work. But probably he would have been less cordial towards him, had he known that at the time the Pope sent for Titian to Rome, it made Pierino so jealous, and grieved him so much, that it is said he did all in his power to oblige him not to stay there long, but to hasten back to Venice, in which he succeeded.

The following letter relates to the accident which befell poor Sansovino and his machinery, while employed in repairing some of the public buildings at Venice; such as the cathedral-church of St Mark and other edifices.

By Aretin's letter it seems that some part of the works of Sansovino had given way and fallen to the ground, in consequence of which he at first suffered disgrace and confinement; but was soon restored to liberty and the favour of the Senate.

"TO MASTER TITIAN.

"Returning about four o'clock to my house, I received your letter, and at the same time, an account of the fall of Sansovino and his machine, and of his confinement near the place. The joy that I had felt at so soon hearing from you was quickly turned into sorrow at the news of his misfortune: and truly I cannot restrain my tears whilst I write to you, and that is no small thing for me. What you may suppose adds to my vexation is, that I considered him as so free from all chance of misfortune. All the night instead of sleeping I walked about the room, thinking what great disasters fortune had designed for so virtuous and honest a man, and condemning Fate as extrordinarily capricious in making that very work which appeared so likely to be the tabernacle of the glory of our brother, become the sepulchre of his fame. For before this, I did not despair but that I should have heard no other account than that those most Serene Fathers, in their prudence and mercy, would have looked rather at the excellent intentions of this worthy man, than at the defects of judgment that he had shown in some parts of his management. For I am thoroughly conscious that in all our actions nothing is more deceitful than the opinion

we entertain of ourselves. Besides, it would not astonish me at all, if every edifice were to fall that is built at present according to the rules of Vitruvius, since the construction of ancient architecture can by no means be made conformable to the habits of the moderns; for the ancient buildings required magnitude to support the weight of their component parts, and a proportionable amplitude of space in which our forefathers delighted, totally careless about the immense treasures expended on them. And, therefore, their proportions are by no means to be accommodated to the small space to which the moderns are confined by the desire of saving expense. For buildings of this kind to be excellent and proper require not only abundance of wealth but also abundance of room.

"I now return with pleasure to bathe my eyes in tears of joy at hearing of the magnanimous goodness of our excellent masters, who lay all the blame on the hurry of finishing the work, together with the ignorance of the workmen and the severity of the weather, added to the damage it received by the shocks from the explosion of some artillery which were discharged upon the arrival of several ships. And so the worthy man is restored to his original favour, and his enemy is imprisoned who deprived him

of it, only because he was rash enough to do what he thought was for the best. I recommended to him, smiling, to consider that although he failed this time in obtaining the praise of the multitude which he merited for so splendid a spectacle, yet he remained as he was before, and may make amends for the blame incurred by envy, because he had in part failed.

" Pietro Aretino.

" Venice."

One day Michael Angelo, in company with Vasari, paid a visit to Titian in the Belvidere, to see a picture he was then finishing of a naked female figure, representing Danae with Jupiter descending to her in a shower of gold. While in the presence of Titian, they bestowed great praise on his performance; but as soon as they were come away and began to make their observations upon Titian's works in general, Buonarotti commended him highly, saying his colouring was most excellent, as well as his manner of execution; but that it was a great pity the Venetian painters had not a better mode of study, and that they were not early initiated in sound principles of drawing and composition. " For I am conscious," says he,

" that if this man was as much assisted by art, as he is by nature, no mortal could go further. He has a noble spirit; but at present having no knowledge of design, he in his imitation of the life corrects nothing nor attempts to make it better, though possessed of a manner so easy and beautiful, so full of truth and animation. But certain it is, that not having studied the best works of the ancients, the Venetians know not how to mend or give a grace and perfection to their works beyond their model, which is never perfect in all its parts. The moderns in general cannot, from their own resources, be correct, but are obliged to make a literal copy of the object before their eyes, not knowing what it ought to be." However, this inimitable figure, which Titian painted for the Cardinal Farnese, Michael Angelo frequently went to see, and gazed at it with rapture and astonishment.

Mengs says of Titian, " That there is no doubt of his having had the talent to become a great designer, because he possessed much exactness of eye for imitating nature and of course the antique, if he had chosen to study it; but his fondness for colouring left him no time to make this part of the art a solid study; from whence I run no risk in saying that Titian might have been an excellent designer. He

was wonderfully easy in the touch of his pencil, nor ever negligent; even his pencilling is well conceived. The effect and the force of the *chiaro-scuro* in his paintings does not consist in the obscurity of the shade nor in the clearness of the light, but in the disposal of the local tints."

Barry says of Titian, that "his style of drawing is not remarkable for any excellence. In this part of the art he has but little selection, and was closely attached to whatever he saw that was not grossly faulty in the nature that fell in his way. His forms therefore, though well enough rendered, are generally imperfect. Titian was ideal and scientific only in his colouring."

And yet, if Mengs and Barry had possessed only the power of drawing in an equal degree to Titian, it would in them have been considered as their highest excellence.

Lodovico Dolce relates an anecdote, told him by Titian himself, which is this. When Rome was sacked by the soldiers of the Duke of Bourbon, some Germans among them were quartered in the Pope's palace of the Vatican; when unluckily, either by carelessness or design, some of the heads of the figures, in one of the chambers painted by Raphael, were greatly

injured: and on Pope Clement's return to his palace, being extremely hurt at seeing those exquisite heads so much defaced, he employed Bastiano del Piombo * to repair them. Titian, while at Rome, went of course to the palace, and in passing through the apartments, accompanied by Bastiano, stedfastly fixed his attention upon these pictures of Raphael, which he had never seen before; and coming to the parts that Bastiano had repaired, and discerning the wide difference between them and the others, he, with great warmth and resentment, asked him, "What presumptuous ignorant wretch had spoiled those heads?" not knowing, nor even suspecting, that they had been restored by Sebastiano.

* Sebastiano del Piombo was born at Venice, in 1485. Invited to Rome by Agostino Chigi, he gave up his whole time to Michael Angelo; but by his advice attempted the manner of Raphael, and soon acquired a distinguished reputation. As a disciple of Giorgione, he became extremely successful in colouring, and his portraits were much admired. Diffident, however, of his talents, he painted with so much timidity and caution that he left many noble works unfinished; and as soon as Clement VII gave him the office of Keeper of the Leaden Seals, he resolved to abandon the art altogether. Finding himself in easy circumstances, he gave himself up to a love of ease and pleasure, living in the society of his friends, and devoting much of his time to the charms of poetry and music, in which be excelled. He died in 1547. The resurrection of Lazarus was by him, which Mr Angerstein had in his collection.

Dolce, the relater of this anecdote, was one who ranked high among the *literati* of the age of Clement VII, and was intimately connected with many of the most celebrated persons of his time, and esteemed by them and his contemporaries in general for his learning and taste. At the first performance of his tragedy of Mariamne, the theatre was so crowded that the actors could not proceed. He translated into his native language several of the writings of antiquity, particularly those of Euripides, Horace, and Cicero. He also wrote several original works, in which he approved himself a man of extensive knowledge, an able critic, and an accomplished gentleman. But what makes him more particularly an object of our notice is, that he wrote a dialogue on painting, supposed to be between Aretin and another speaker, whom he names Fabrini. This dialogue must be of great value, if it be true, as is said in his own country and generally believed, that in its composition he had not only his own genius and abilities to consult, but had also the advantage of the thoughts which Raphael had committed to writing upon the subject, and which he put into Dolce's hands to dispose and methodize. Dolce was born Anno Dom. 1508, and died in 1568.

Titian at this time painted a portrait of M. Francesco Filetto, an orator of great excellence; a picture that (as my author expresses it) seems alive. It was first in the possession of his son, and afterwards in the collectiou of Messer Matteo Giustiniani, a great lover of the arts. In the same collection is a very fine picture by Giacomo di Bassano, as indeed there are a great many very fine performances, by the same artist, dispersed through the Venetian territory, and he is held in high estimation, particularly for small figures and animals of all sorts.

Titian, while at Rome, again painted the famous Bembo, who was soon after made a Cardinal. He also painted Fracastorio, and the Cardinal Accolti of Ravenna. These are in the collection of the Grand Duke of Tuscany; and the Venetian sculptor, Danese, had in his possession a portrait by the hand of Titian, of a gentleman of the family of Delpini.

Benedetto Accolti was secretary to Clement VII, together with his friend Sadoleto. In 1524 he was made Archbishop of Ravenna, and afterwards a Cardinal in 1527, just three days before the assault on Rome by the Imperialists. He is extolled as a very elegant scholar by Bembo, Molza, and Ariosto. When he was

governor of the Marches of Ancona in 1535, Paul the Third ordered him to be imprisoned in the castle of St Angelo; but he was soon afterwards set at liberty at the intercession of Charles the Fifth. After being restored to liberty, he devoted himself to study and the society of men of letters, and led a retired life at Ferrara, as is proved by the learned Mazzuchelli.

While Titian was at Rome, it is said his son Horatio gained great credit at Venice by a very fine portrait he painted of a certain Master Battista Ceciliano, a famous performer on the violin. This son of Titian was born at Venice, and distinguished himself (even when very young) as a painter of portraits, which were done after the manner of his father, and some of them were esteemed little inferior. He occasionally attempted historical subjects: one of the most considerable of these was in the ducal palace at Venice, but it was destroyed by fire. He executed several portraits for Guidobaldo, Duke of Urbino. Latterly he painted but little, being more taken up with chemistry than painting. He died in the flower of his age, in the same year with his father (1576) and of the same dreadful malady, the plague, aged 36.

If the above anecdote is true, that Titian's son painted this musician's portrait during his

father's stay at Rome, there must be some mistake as to his age at the time of his death, since by that account at the time Titian was at Rome, Horatio could not be more than six or seven years old.

But Titian had a nephew, whom it is said he took with him to Rome, named Marco Vecelli, commonly called Marco di Tiziano. He was the favourite disciple of his great instructor, whom he also accompanied into Germany. This artist was born at Venice, and approached nearer to the style of his uncle, both in composition and colour, than any of his other relatives. There are several considerable works by him in the palace of St Mark; amongst the most esteemed of which is an allegorical subject on the peace of Italy, in the chamber of the *Sala del Consiglio*. Another admired work of Marco Vecelli is a picture in the *Sala della Bussola*, representing the Doge Leonardo Donato kneeling before the Virgin and Infant Christ. He also painted several large works for churches at Venice, Treviso, and in the Friuli, particularly a picture of Christ fulminating his judgments on the world, and the Virgin and several Saints interceding. This is in the church of St John and St Paul at Venice. He died in 1611, aged 66, leaving a son named Tiziano Vecelli, familiarly

called Tizianello. The latter, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, acquired some reputation by the pictures he painted for the public edifices at Venice. The excellent principles which had been established by the great founder of the Venetian school, had however now given way to negligence and mannerism, which is evident in all this artist's works. His best productions are his portraits, which possess the merit of resemblance and a natural tone of flesh-colour. As I am on the subject of those of Titian's relations who were painters, I may add here some account of Cæsar Vecelli, who was the younger brother of Titian, and flourished about the year 1560. We have by him a set of prints engraved from designs by his brother, in a spirited and masterly style, representing the ancient and modern habiliments of various parts of the world, published at Venice in the year 1590, entitled, *Degli habite antiche e moderne dei diverse parte del mondo, libri due fatti da Cesare Vecellio.* A second edition of this work appeared in 1664, with a more explanatory title, as follows: *Racolta dei figure delineate dal gran Tiziano, è da Cesare Vecellio suo fratello diligentemente intagliate.*

On the subject of the portrait from the cast of Giovanni de Medicis we have the following curious letter from Aretin.

"TO THE DUKE COSMO DE MEDICIS.

"I send your Excellency the portrait of the Landgrave with the four verses I have made upon it; although I do not hold with such a faction, nor think much of the troublesome importunities of the sect of Lutherans, which has almost split my head; but of the honour which it appears to me it acquires from the Emperor in contrasting the wonderful fate of Captain Quer, with that of Signor Giovanni.* It is to be engraved however. Titian has taken the features from the medal, and from the cast of the face itself; and as soon as it is finished, and the words I composed placed under it, it shall be sent to your illustrious Excellency, that you may impart it to the world.

"And I kiss your hands with the usual reverence of your useless servant,

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, December 30, 1546."

* Giovanni of the Black Band.

CHAPTER XIX.

TITIAN VISITS THE COURT OF CHARLES V, IN GERMANY—PICTURES PAINTED BY HIM AT THIS TIME—LETTERS TO AND FROM ARETIN.

TITIAN now took leave of Rome, having been munificently rewarded by the Pope for what he had done; particularly by a good benefice which was given to his son Pomponio. The Pope also offered him the lucrative office of *the Seals of Lead*, vacant by the death of Fra Bastiano del Piombo, but he declined accepting the appointment from motives of delicacy. On his return to Venice, Titian took Florence in his way, in order to see the curiosities of that beautiful city, which struck him (says Vasari) with no less wonder and delight than he had felt at Rome. He paid his respects to Duke Cosmo de' Medicis, at that time at his villa of Poggio à Cajano, and offered to paint his portrait. This was declined by the Duke, probably from delicacy, not being willing to give offence to the many excellent artists in his own city and dominions.

Titian being now returned to his own house, finished a picture of the Marquis del Guasto, addressing a speech to his soldiers. It was not long after that he received so pressing an invitation from his first protector, Charles V, to visit the Court of Germany, that he could no longer refuse it: and it was not only his own inclination to comply with the flattering request of the Emperor, but he was also urged to it by the advice of his faithful counsellor, Aretin, as will be seen by the following letters. It is certain that Charles had a very urgent desire to get our artist into his employ, and pressed him to comply with many promises and entreaties, for he was anxious to wrest the palm of glory from the brows of his rival, Francis I of France, in arts as well as arms; and he perceived that there was no other living merit but Titian's which he could oppose to that of Leonardo da Vinci, whom Francis had several years before taken under his particular patronage and protection, and who had died at an extreme old age, in the arms of the French King. A letter of Aretin shews in what high estimation he held this request of the Emperor to Titian.

"TO TITIAN.

"Neither Apelles nor Praxitiles nor any others who have carved images or painted por-

traits of Kings and Princes, can boast of rewards in gold and jewels that can equal in value the honor which your excellent genius has received from his august Majesty in deigning to call you to his court: demonstrating thereby how great a part you occupy in his mind even at the moment when he is framing laws for all the world, and at a time too when he is perplexed and thwarted by tumults and by plots. And if it be true also, as is asserted by envious tongues, that he who treats with contempt the being handed down in sculpture or painting as a hero or even a companion of the Gods, and desires only to be engraved in the hearts and painted in the memories of good and prudent men—I say, if you believe these reports, then how great a mark of distinction does he pay to your extraordinary merit, when he submits to be represented in picture by you, thus acknowledging the power of your inimitable hand! Go then to him; and when you are at his feet, adore him not only in your own name but in mine also.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, December 1547."

The following letter of Aretin to Titian, we perceive, must have been written immediately after that great man's departure on his journey to Vienna. Of this journey we have no particular account: though several of his letters are preserved. It appears to me very extraordinary and unaccountable that Aretin should be represented by bigots in religion as an infidel in his opinions: surely the letter here inserted is a beautiful effusion of pure piety.

"TO TITIAN.

"Of that most excellent picture of Christ so much alive and true to nature, which you carried to the Emperor, you have this morning, being my birth-day, sent me a copy, the most precious gift you ever bestowed as a memorial on those you held highest in your favour. The crown is really of Thorns, and the blood that is shed from the piercing of the points of it really blood; nor could the scourge itself inflame or make the flesh appear more swoln and livid than your pencil has done in the representation of this divine, immortal, and holy subject. The restrained agony in the figure of Jesus, then the arm bound with cords, which

confine the hands, must move with compassion whosoever beholds it and is a Christian. One learns to be humble in contemplating the extremity of wretchedness indicated by the reed held in the left hand: nor can any one dare to feel the smallest degree of hatred or rancour who surveys the tranquil grace which is shown in the countenance and pervades the whole figure, so that the place wherein it rests is no longer a worldly or a stately chamber, but is converted into an Holy Temple, sacred to God. I am at my orisons, to convert luxury and pleasure into honesty and truth; and I return you my thanks for this great proof of your kindness and your skill.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, January 1548."

The following letter of Aretin to Sansovino, the Sculptor, will prove the great gratification he felt at receiving the precious gift presented to him by Titian.

"TO SANSOVINO.

"Mr Jacopo, my brother, I pray you come and see the Christ that has been given me by Titian, because when you see it (as praise and honour are the nourishment of virtue and

art) we may feast this great genius with our admiration and praise, and do honour to the name of this wonderful man.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, February 1548."

The next letter from Aretin to Titian seems expressive of a little jealousy and of an apprehension that the latter would become proud of the great favour shown him by the Emperor. However, Titian makes full amends, as will be seen in the following letter, which sets the mind of the sensitive Aretin at rest on that score.

"TO TITIAN FROM ARETIN.

"Though I have had only one letter from you since you arrived at Court, yet I cannot think that the favours of his Majesty have made you so proud that you will not condescend to remember your old friends. If this was the case (which I know it cannot be) instead of congratulating you on the favours of Cæsar, I should rather lament that you had them. Because that greatness is truly contemptible which renders a person insolent; and besides I know that even if ambition had laid violent hands on you with its greedy grasp,

yet you would still have preserved your usual modesty: for you know I should laugh even at the Emperor, if he attempted to make a fool of you. Clear yourself, therefore, from these aspersions, by writing to me two words. After wishing me health in your own name, just say, Giovanni shall in three or four days write to you. Meanwhile Sansovino salutes you. I also do the same.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, April 1548."

"TO TITIAN, THE GREAT PAINTER.

"Signor Giovanni, who is certainly worthy to be your Nephew, has brought me your letter, which contains little more than an inquiry after my health, because you had written so fully in that which you sent me by Castello; so that this has been to me merely as if I had just received a salutation from your mouth. However, there never passes a moment without my seeming to have you before my eyes and hearing your voice; as I know very well, without Signor Tasso's telling me repeatedly, that you hear and see me continually. Remain then, and enjoy with all your soul the favours of his Majesty, which are now so well known

and spread all over Italy, that even those who love you the most can hardly help envying you. But as I shall soon write to you more at length, I will now only tell you, that when you find a proper time and place, pray salute in my name the doer of every act that is great. Bend, my dear friend, to the divinity of this Imperial Charles, who knowing that the government of kingdoms consists in a perpetual state of solicitude, never can enjoy a moment's repose.

" PIETRO ARETINO.

" Venice, April 1548."

" TO M. LORENZO LOTTO.

" Oh, Lotto! good as goodness, and virtuous as virtue! Titian, surrounded by the favours of the world, has written me a letter from Vienna; he salutes you and embraces you tenderly. He would willingly change, he says, the pleasure he receives in the satisfaction his works give the Emperor, for an eye practised like yours, for your advice, which he would be so glad to hear. This great painter, who joins so much dignity to his talents, is not deceived in his opinion of you, for your wisdom is matured by age, by nature, and by art; to that you join a most amiable sincerity; and when you give your

judgment on the works of others, you do it just as you do on those of Titian, when he shows you his works to get your opinion of them. Your heart knows no envy; but on the contrary, you feel a pleasure in seeing in other masters some beauties of the art which you think you yourself do not possess, which however produces those miracles which seldom proceed from the style of such as are too much pleased with their own manner. But if you excel them in painting, you leave them far behind in the practice of a real piety. Heaven has in store for you a glory which is not to be compared to the praises of men.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"April, 1548."

"TO M. ANDREA ISCHIAVONE.

"Your cruelty in no longer showing me your pictures, is just like to that of the son who forgets his father's love to him. Formerly you used never to paint any thing, whether profane or sacred, without having it brought to show me; and the most admirable Titian (who is no less dear to the fifth Charles than Apelles was to Alexander)—Titian, I say, knows the manner in which I have always praised the wonderful quickness of your intelligent

pencil. And if this extraordinary painter was astonished at the practice you showed in making with the greatest correctness sketches of history-pieces, so well felt and composed, that if the haste in executing them had been converted into diligence in finishing, he would have confirmed me in my opinion of your excellence. For the invention which you display in putting the figures together, merits praise without any thing else; since very few of those who paint are expert in giving the beauties which are comprised in invention. But setting aside all that I can say to correct you, let me not take away the profit from time, whose office it is to teach youth how to amend their faults; who whilst they increase in years, increase also in discretion, which enables them to convert their errors into knowledge.

"I conclude this with praying you to come and see me soon, with some new picture; and in doing me this favour, you will gladden me at once with your company and your art.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, April 1548."

For the life of this excellent Venetian painter, Andrea Ischiavone, an imitator of Titian, see Redolfi, page 227.

"TO BIANCO, THE SCULPTOR.

"That I, Master Simon, have certainly in my life-time seen many statues of both Gods and men, you will easily believe without my swearing it. But of all that were ever presented to my eyes, none ever gave me so much pleasure or filled my mind with such wonder and astonishment, as I felt on seeing the bust taken by your chisel and your genius of the heavenly beauty, who is united in matrimony to the magnificent Messer Nicolo Molino, who is not less my friend and patron than he is yours. The beauty of this excellent lady is much obliged to the happy art with which you have given spirit to marble, with so exquisite a grace that Nature herself almost confesses that it is in nothing inferior to the life. It may be possible, though I can hardly believe it, that Diana, formerly on earth or now in heaven, possessed such wonderful beauty of countenance, her look so commanding, her gesture so noble, and all her air so replete with grace, that she enamours the beholders with that purity and honour, which seems diffused over every part of this angelic beauty. This is my judgment, as well as that of Sansovino and Titian; nor is it presumption in me to say

I think so, as if I thought that these illustrious artists had only formed their conclusion from my opinion, because they themselves affirm, that if in sculpture or painting they know how to produce wonders, yet in delivering an opinion or speaking about art, they must yield to me, although they will yield to none else. But what better testimony can you have in proof of this, than my instantly informing you of the defect in the hair, which being twisted together too coarsely, appears as if the tresses were entangled? Every body who runs to see this immortal work, though they extol every other part to the skies, yet they are ready enough to cast a slur with their envious tongues, by repeating this opinion which first proceeded from my mouth from the most brotherly motives, and solely for your information. But I should not have boasted so much of what I said upon your productions from vainglory; but, in truth, I have done it merely that I may not appear to be one of those who praise or blame others without being able to give a reason why they do praise or blame them.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, April 1548."

"TO DANESE, THE SCULPTOR.

"If Titian and Sansovino, the one as extraordinary in sculpture as the other in painting, have been not only once but many times to see the likeness of the immortal Bembo, in which your chisel displays its wonders, why may not I, I pray you, come a thousand times to contemplate it? You should be very thankful, I will not say to Death, who has given you such an opportunity of displaying so manifestly your admirable talents upon so famous a subject, but to the magnificent M. Girolamo Quirini, who understands sculpture so well, that he has known how to select the best hand to do justice to the memory of that most praiseworthy man.

"Write to me quickly to settle the day and the hour when I shall come, upon condition that after I have gratified my eyes in looking at this most venerable figure, I may have my ears delighted by hearing you read some of those compositions where the style places you nearer to Petrarch and Dante than many professors of statuary place you to Michael Angelo and Jacopo (Sansovino). I shall expect that you will not delay the favour I ask, because procrastination disparages what one wishes to obtain and is a mortification to those who ask the favour. "PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, April 1548."

"TO M. GEORGIO VASARI.

"If your letters alone have filled my soul with all the joy and tenderness that fathers feel at receiving letters from their sons, what consolation do you think I should have felt in my whole mind and heart, if I had received with them the portrait of her who gave birth to me at Arezzo? I not only beg but supplicate you by all your affection to virtue, that you will be so kind as to put aside all other matters and turn to the gate of St Peter, where the resemblance of the Virgin receiving the Annunciation of the Angel stands—take this for your model, and send me the copy by the way of the Courier Lorenzetto from Florence; for this portrait of my beloved mother, in all the graces of your rare and excellent style, will have so lively an effect upon me, that seeing her picture, I shall feel almost as much joy as I should feel at seeing her alive. And this pleasure I shall enjoy, though she is dead, that her being drawn in the dress and colours in which Mary, the Mother of Christ is depicted, will be a sufficient testimony of the holy excellence of this most modest and pure woman.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, December 1548."

"TO M. GEORGIO VASARI.

"Do you know why I do not complain that I am of Arezzo? It is that I may not injure, together with the antiquity of this country, those celebrated spirits from whose fame this noble land has been called the Mother of Genius. Therefore I, with that share of intellect given me by the grace of the God of Nature, cannot but consider the possession of it as an instrument of power; whilst the multitude of those who cannot endure me because I will not imitate them in their wickedness, throw blame upon me, and therefore try to drag me down with themselves into the ditch where they were born. I say this in disparagement of such wretches, but feel the highest reverence for those (not a few) who in every honourable pursuit exalt and glorify their family and blood as I endeavour to exalt and glorify mine, which solely depends on my own exertions. However, I must sometimes be dependent upon others; for our Illustrious Rulers, merely from friendship, and not from brotherhood, have buried my deceased niece, with a state suitable to the daughter of a Cavalier, and not to a relation of mine, who have not the honour of being a person of quality, but as a man of merit receive

rewards every day from some one or other of the great lords who rule here. Besides, if it was only on account of the respect our Duke entertains for the virtues he thinks I possess, this, I say, ought to be an example to those ignorant malicious persons, who, if they were all destroyed by the plague, it would be an excellent thing for the country. But as I shall shortly speak of all this in a letter to our patrons at Florence, I will leave all these material facts, and enter at once upon the tender joy which bathed my eyes with tears at beholding the portrait of her who brought me into the world.* But I must confess that I was disappointed of the pleasure and benefit I had expected on its first arrival, because they have converted her into something very different from herself. But if she appears still so admirable, even in a painting of that day when they knew so little of art, what would she be if she were painted now by your pencil which is so full of ability? I swear to you by the tender charity that I bear her memory, that every one who ever saw her, affirmed with a loud voice, that really she was such a perfect image of modesty and meekness, that instead of drawing her in this manner as a portrait, she ought to have

* The portrait of his mother mentioned in the preceding letter.

been like the figures represented in the *Annunciation*, for it was doing injustice to Nature who created her so beautiful, thus to convert her image into any other kind of beauty but her own. And Titian, that great painter, affirms that he never saw a child who did not discover some propensity to vice in its countenance, except Andrea;* who, in the forehead, the eyes, and the nose is so like Tita (for that was the name of this admirable woman) that she seems rather to be her child than mine. I now thank you for the gift, because I know the fatigue you have endured in pleasing me is not less dear to your soul, than it is grateful to mine to do any work which may be useful to you, as you may have observed many times.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, April 1549."

In the following year Titian was still with the Emperor's Court, on its way back to Spain.

"TITIAN TO SIGNOR ARETINO, A MOST DEAR FRIEND.

"SIGNOR PIETRO, MY HONOURED FRIEND,

"I wrote to you by M. Eneas, that I held your letter in the core of my heart, waiting for

* Aretin's daughter.

an opportunity of giving it to his Majesty. The other day, and since Parmegiano went away, I was called to the Emperor, when after the usual reverence, and after he had looked at the pictures I had brought to him, he asked me about you, and if I had your letter; to which I answered, Yes, and presented it to him: and the Emperor, though he read it to himself, yet read it in such a manner that it was heard by his Highness his son, the Duke of Alva, Don Luigi d'Avila, with the other Lords of the Chamber. But as in this letter I was referred to, he asked me what you wished him to do. I answered that it was reported at Venice, in Rome, and all over Italy, that his Holiness had a strong intention to serve you. Upon this the Emperor shewed signs of pleasure in his countenance; and said that it would gratify him much, and that he would not fail to do what he could for your ease and pleasure; adding many great and honourable words in commendation of you. So that now, my dear brother, I have done that good office for you, which it is my duty to do for all true friends like yourself; and if I can serve you in any other respect, you may command me without ceremony. The Duke d'Alva never passes a day without talking to me of the divine Aretin; for he loves you much, and says

he will be your advocate with his Majesty. I told him you would spend a world of money if you had it; that you give away so much, even all you had; and that you gave the poor the very clothes off your back; and that you are an honour to Italy, which is the truth, and he knows it.

"I gave Monsignor d'Arasse your letter to him; and you will have an answer shortly. Signor Filippo Obi set off the other day for England. He salutes you, and says he shall not be content till he can do you some service himself, besides the good offices he hopes to render you with his own sovereign. Be joyful then: for, by God's grace, you may be so, and keep me always in your good graces. Salute Signor Jacopo Sansovino for me, and kiss the hands of all my friends.

"Your friend and companion,

"TITIAN.

"Agosta, November 11th, 1550."

Of the above-mentioned Eneas Vicus Parmegiano, who carried Titian's letter to Aretin, I find the following anecdote, relative to the visit of Eneas to Charles V.

Both Charles and his son, Philip the second of Spain, are said to have practised the art of

painting. Parmegiano, the unrivalled engraver of his time, and a most learned and subtle investigator of all matters relative to history, as appears by his *Treatise upon Medals*, and his *Genealogy of the Emperors*, having a few years before returned with the engraving of the portrait of Charles the Fifth, encircled with various ornaments, representing his great glory and enterprises; the Emperor took it in his hand, held it in a proper light at the window, examined it a long time very attentively, and ordered many copies to be taken of it; but this could not be done, as the plate had been gilt; and again examining minutely the invention and design, gave proofs that his judgment was little inferior to a good artist's, and presented Parmegiano with two hundred crowns.

The art of engraving on copper and other medals, which was now brought to great perfection, had been invented by Moses Finiguezzi, a goldsmith of Florence, in the fifteenth century; some say in Flanders, but the former is the common opinion.

The principal lords of the court of the Emperor, showing some jealousy at the singular regard and preference he seemed to have for Titian, Charles observed to them that he could never want a court of nobles: "I can make a

thousand of you when I will," he said, "but God alone can make a painter like Titian."

This speech has been put in the mouth of other sovereigns besides Charles the Fifth, and applied to other painters beside Titian. But who first said it, is uncertain. The following letter is an answer to the foregoing one.

"TO M. TITIAN.

"HONOURED FRIEND,

"The letter of the fourth of the present month, which I received by M. Eneas, was delightful to me, because it put to rest some doubts which disturbed my mind concerning your safe arrival at the Augustan Court; and the other letter, which I have since received, dated the eleventh, has given me the greatest joy and gladness that can be. But whose heart would not rejoice on hearing what kind, what affectionate benignity his Majesty expressed towards me, that on seeing you he should ask how I was, and if you had brought him any letters from me? How sweetly and agreeably his promise sounded, that he would endeavour to do me any good office with the Pope, and that he would soon write an answer to mine; at the same time speaking so honourably of me in presence of his Highness, of the Duke of Alva,

and of D'Avila. For this graciousness towards me may God grant him blessings: for he is most dear to me. I cannot but be grateful because I derive such benefits from his goodness, and not from any virtue that I possess, or that can be found in me.

"To you, divine man, I will say nothing: for since we two are as one in friendship, to thank you would be superfluous.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, November 1550."

At this time the Emperor assigned Titian a pension of two hundred crowns a year, on the Chamber of Naples. When he afterwards painted the portrait of Philip the Second, the Emperor's son, the latter also granted him a pension for life of another two hundred crowns a year. These two pensions, making four hundred crowns a year, with the three before granted to him from the Fondaco de Tedeschi by the Senate of Venice, made together seven hundred crowns *per annum* (independent of any other gains from his works) a great sum at that period. Titian was recommended, by both Charles and Philip, to paint the portrait of Cosmo de Medicis, duke of Florence, which he executed accordingly, and it is now in the collection at Florence.

"TO THE EXCELLENT SIGNOR PIETRO ARETINO, FROM FRANCESCO TERZO, THE ENGRAVER OF BERGAMO.

"MOST EXCELLENT SIR,

"It is a great vexation to friends not to be able to give a proof of friendship, equal in value to the regard they feel for the beloved object. But I will not doubt that you will be pleased with a small pledge of affection, because you who regard the mind of the giver will excuse the unworthiness of the gift, occasioned by that poverty which is imputable to the ignorance and avarice of the rich, who neglect genius when buried in obscurity. For it is not enough to have laboured and given proofs of merit, if you are not by means of some intelligent person made known to those who can remunerate you. It is entirely owing to the pen and favours of Aretin, that the works of Titian have their great reputation, and that he has obtained the rewards he so well deserves. This is the reason that has always kept my talents concealed, having ever been obliged to work hard for my bread; but I do not in the least doubt some time or other to find an opportunity of becoming known, and that the Lord God, by means of friends, will help me. For I

know, though I am poor in purse, yet I am rich in abilities.

"Signor Pietro, having at this time no more suitable subject to present to you, I send you the portrait of a most excellent young woman. And because she is not known to you, I have changed the dress and concealed the name, as I do not wish the reason to be talked of which induced me to do this work. I hope you will have patience with me for the present, as with this I dedicate myself to you and your commands. I pray you to accept me in the number of your most affectionate servants, and that you will deign to remember me to Doni; and with this I kiss your hands.

"Francesco Terzo, Painter.

"Milan, July 11th, 1551."

Poor Terzo seems to think that Aretin made Titian great, and that he could therefore make him great also if he chose so to do. But Terzo did not recollect the Spanish proverb, quoted by Sancho Panza. In this instance we see the folly of inordinate self-opinion. Titian contributed much more towards his great success than it was possible for Aretin to do. Of this secret Terzo's conceit of himself rendered him insensible. However, Aretin seems to have

much approved of his performance; and gives him great encouragement, as we see by his answer to the above.

"TO M. FRANCESCO TERZO.

"And so, oh rare painter! you cannot believe that you can produce figures of excellence; and why not? For envy itself cannot help praising the portrait that was given me by M. Giovanni in your name, in which you have shewn not less affection than genius. It is so excellent an imitation of nature, that it appears rather like the spirit of a living person than a painted imitation of a lady's complexion. Titian, a man who has as much taste as worth, commends it, and praises it in no less marked a way than by saying it is in the style of his son. And I who am nothing but that I speak truth, may be believed, when I assure you that this friend answered me, when I told him you were coming here, by saying he would take you into his house. But when you come, I wish you to lodge with me. For really your manner promises so much in the art, that I rejoice as much as if it was for my own benefit. It is very true that I am very sorry that your encouragement (considering your merit) does not equal your deserts: but by little and little

you will get to the top. Besides, Fortune would do much for persons of genius, if all at once they abounded in gold and silver. However, you may be certain that a person of intellect will never remain long in distress; for attaining by his genius a degree of excellence, he will become wealthy. For instance, here is Leone, now living like a lord, after having endured intolerable labour, study, and want: and Titian the same. Still I am content, and would not change my condition for the wealth of either one or the other; for what does it come to? They do not dress better than myself, or dwell in a better house, or keep a better table; and they are servants to high personages. I know the world: the more I give away and the more company I entertain, the more friends I shall find, and the more honour it will do me. But perhaps I may, notwithstanding, in time be better off than I am at present. This remains to be seen. However, whether I am or am not great, still I am able to do you service, and always will. But I shall say no more to you, except that you may dispose of me and that I expect you.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice August 1551."

CHAPTER XX.

TITIAN GOES INTO SPAIN — PATENT OF NOBILITY GRANTED HIM BY THE EMPEROR — PICTURES IN THE ROYAL PALACES—MENGS AND CUMBERLAND.

Carlo Ridolfi, the biographer of Titian, says he never came into Spain, but in this he is mistaken. It was not however till the year 1553, that he visited that country. During his residence there he executed many admirable works, and received princely rewards for them. Charles gave him the Key, the order of Santiago, at Brussels; and in 1553, constituted him Count Palatine of the Empire at Barcelona, by an instrument worthy to be recorded. The original legal document is written, of course, in barbarous law-latin, and filled with tautology; but the following translation is nearly word for word the same.

"Charles the Fifth, by divine favour, august

Emperor of the Romans, King of Germany and Spain, greets with the grace and blessing of Cæsar, our distinguished, faithful, and beloved Titian of Vecelli, knight and count of the sacred Lateran Palace, and of our Court and Imperial Consistory.

"As it has always been our custom, since by the divine auspices we were exalted to the lofty dignity of Cæsar, to bestow our regard, grace, and favour chiefly on persons remarkable for fidelity and attachment to us and to the holy Roman Empire, who possessed excellent morals, and who were celebrated and eminent above others in virtue, ingenious arts and industry; observing therefore your remarkable fidelity towards us and the holy Roman Empire, together with your illustrious qualities and the endowments of your genius in that exquisite science of painting and in finishing portraits to the life, in which art indeed you appear to us to merit being named the Apelles of our age, &c. &c.

"Therefore of our own intent, fixed knowledge and deliberation, and assisted by the wise counsel of the princes, counts, barons, and others of our own beloved nobles of the sacred Empire, and with the plenitude of our Imperial power, we constitute, create, and elevate you,

the aforesaid TITIAN, Count of the sacred Lateran palace, of our court, and Imperial consistory, and with clemency we distinguish you with the title of Count Palatine:—conformably to the tenure of these presents, we constitute, create, establish, elevate, and rank you in their order," &c.

It seems by this instrument that Titian had been previously a Knight and Count of the holy Lateran Palace, of the Imperial court and consistory, and that the present instrument made him a Count Palatine.

These honours it is the more necessary to recal to the reader's attention, as they are at this time so totally absorbed and lost in the splendour of his single name, so universally known from his eminent talents, that it seems like a jest even to mention the inferior distinctions bestowed on him by earthly princes; for he was a man endowed by heaven with such transcendant abilities, that to use the words of Kneller in speaking of himself, "he was one of God Almighty's noblemen." However, these favors we find alarmed the jealousy of the nobles both of Germany and Spain, though their envy drew no other answer from Charles than that he had many nobles in his empire, but only one Titian. The

painter, it is said, who was at no great distance employed upon some picture, overheard the retort with conscious satisfaction, and as he made his reverence to the Emperor, dropt one of his pencils on the floor; the courteous monarch took it up, and delivering it to Titian, who was confounded by this second mark of condescension, said, that "to wait on Titian was service for an Emperor."—Charles not only graced this eminent artist with splendid titles and distinctions as above mentioned, but he gave him more solid marks of his favour, assigning him a pension of four hundred ducats per annum, besides a munificent compensation for every picture he executed for him, and frequently sending him large sums of money, which were always accompanied by this obliging testimony, "That his design was not to pay him the value of his pictures, because they were above all price." And certainly Titian's excellence was so great, that had the Emperor or the Duke of Ferrara granted him far greater largesses, they would not have more than rewarded his merit.

During his residence of three years in Germany and Spain, he painted many most admirable pictures, for which we find he was well remunerated. This Emperor certainly has the

merit of adorning Spain with the noblest pictures that were then to be met with in the world. Palomeno says, that Charles regarded the possession of a capital piece of Titian's more than he did the addition of a new province to his dominions: but Palomeno (says Cumberland) was a painter, and more familiar with the pictures of Titian than with the politics of the Emperor. Such a preference would have been a caprice unworthy of any prince, but Charles's character was not the sport of caprice, whilst to the very last moment of his life, and even when he resigned his dominions, it was evident that ambition was his ruling passion. Had he been capable of the weakness which Palomeno ascribes to him, he would hardly have taken such pains to the last hour of his reign in persuading his brother Ferdinand to sacrifice his right of succession to the Empire, nor would he have returned into the unfurnished cell of his convent with his puppets and his birds, without one consolatary remembrance of his favourite artist to cheer his solitude or to inflame his devotion. I can hardly be persuaded, adds Cumberland, that Charles's abdication of his Empire was a proof of caprice; he plainly enough perceived his health was gone, and he was not willing that his fame should follow it. Palomeno does

not seem to apprehend the vast difference to Charles between the acquisition of a new province to his dominions, and that of a picture by Titian to his collection. The possession of the picture might be the source of great pleasure to him—the glory still remained with Titian, who was able to produce it. But when Charles added a province to his dominions, the whole glory of it was his own. This sensation an ambitious man will be fully impressed with.

Titian at this time painted for an altar-piece a grand picture of the Holy Trinity, in which, on a throne, is the Virgin Mary with an infant Christ in her arms: above is the dove; the back-ground being of the colour of flame, and God the Father encircled by a glory of cherubims. At one side of this picture is painted on canvas the Emperor Charles; on the other the Empress; they are facing each other, and with their hands lifted up as if in the action of prayer, accompanied by a multitude of saints, selected by the Emperor's direction: who now having pushed to the utmost bounds his grand schemes of victory, began to think it time to cherish more serious thoughts, and retire from the world. This he soon afterwards put into practice, and informed Titian that the picture should be placed in the monas-

tery to which he intended to withdraw to end his days in piety and prayer. This composition, though so extraordinary in its aspect or rather I may say divine, has never been engraved.

Titian had painted the portrait of Charles several times, as I have before observed; but now being called to the court of that prince, he for the last time painted his portrait, just as it then appeared in the latter part of his life, and this picture also much pleased the renowned Emperor. Certain it is, that the very first portrait Titian drew of him so struck him with admiration, that he would never after sit to any other artist; and for every portrait Titian took of him he gave him a thousand crowns in gold. Titian in all painted three portraits of the Emperor; and when he last sat to him, at the conclusion of the picture, Charles said with emphasis, "This is the third time I have triumphed over death."

The pictures which Titian did in Spain, and those he sent there, form of themselves a large and magnificent collection; the catalogues of the Escurial and Madrid convey some idea of them, but by no means an adequate one. To particularize their respective merit is not in my power, never having been in Spain.

In a posthumous publication of Antony Ra-

phael Mengs, printed at Madrid in 1780, there are some observations on Titian's pictures in the palace of the Escurial. I could wish, for the reader's better gratification, that more had been said by Mengs on the subject; and in general it is to be regretted that he had not entered into a fuller description of the royal collection, of which he professes to give an account. But it is not in the collections of the Escurial and palace of Madrid, as I have before said, that we can find the sum of Titian's works in Spain. Many capital pictures are dispersed; many perished in the deplorable fire that destroyed the Prado; some have been by a late decree excluded for their immodesty. Amongst the pictures that perished in the Prado, were several portraits of the family of the house of Austria, together with one of Titian himself, painted by order of Charles the Fifth, a celebrated work, in which the painter is represented holding in his hand the portrait of the Emperor; transferring by this courtly device the honour of the representation from himself to Charles. There are a great many pictures that are not particularly described: it is sufficient to say of them that, being mostly naked, their defect will, in some people's judgment, appear their recommendation. Certain it is that the unpar-

ralleled and inestimable figure of the *Sleeping Venus*, which was given by Philip the Fourth to our Charles the First, when Prince of Wales, at the time of his visit to Spain, and which, after the death of that unhappy monarch, was purchased by the Spanish Ambassador in England, has been rescued from destruction by the address of Mengs. Cumberland says, "I frequently visited this matchless deity in her hiding-place, where I found her miserably lodged, though respectably attended by an Atalanta in the Race by Guido, divinely executed; a *Helen and Paris* by Rubens, with the *Three Graces* of the same master, coloured to a miracle, but much more *embonpoint* than their principal. To attempt any description of this sleeping Venus appears to me as impossible as it would be to condemn such perfect and withal modest beauties to the flames. A graceful turn of the neck gives the full countenance to the spectator, in which the master-artist has displayed beauty and sweetness of the divinest sort, with the most perfect innocence of character; the limbs are elegantly and decently disposed; the hues are glowing and transparent, the outline round and undulating, and the lights and shades produced by those tender and imperceptible touches that form the magic of Correggio: in

short, it is a miracle of art, and was so decidedly the *chef-d'œuvre* of the master, that after several efforts to rival his own matchless work, he quitted this self-emulation in despair. It is to the honour of Don Antonio Mengs that he saved it from destruction: it had another escape from the flames of the Prado, which fatal accident being reported to Philip the Fourth, then on the throne, he instantly demanded if the *Titian-Venus* had escaped the conflagration: the messenger assured him that it was saved, "Then," replied the King, "all other losses may be supplied." I cannot dismiss this enchanting object without observing that, by the testimony of all the best judges of its merits, it yields in no particular to the *Venus of Medicis*, but in the weaker nature of its material: twice rescued from the flames, it still exists in perfect condition. May no future age of the world produce a hand to raise an axe against the one or to construct a funeral pile for the other!"

There are several paintings by Titian in the Madrid collection upon fabulous subjects. But of all his pictures upon subjects of this description, the most beautiful are two celebrated companions, the one a group of Bacchanals, the other of Cupids, in the apartments of the Princess: the figures in each are of the third

part of the natural size. In the fore-ground of the group of Bacchanals, there is a young female votaress asleep, of which Don Antonio Mengs, in his critique above-mentioned, speaks with rapture. He says that he never saw it without that striking novelty of delight as if he had never discovered it before. The colouring of this figure, he observes, is in Titian's clearest manner; and the gradation of tints through the whole group (which is all naked, and which, with an infinite variety of nice discrimination, composes one uniform tone) is wonderfully contrived, and constitutes such a model in the art of colouring, as he never met with in any other example: he concludes his remarks on this picture by observing, that all the harmonious accompaniments of sky, variegated soil, with deep and tender shades of trees, form a better picture in this style, than he thinks the world can produce. The other picture represents a very numerous group of beautiful Cupids, disposed in a wonderful variety of attitudes, employed in childish sports under a grove of apple-trees; the fruit of which they have scattered about the ground, and are playing with in the most gay and natural manner. The same curious gradation of hues in the carnations of the flesh and colours of the hair

obtains in this picture as in the former, and to an equal degree of excellence : the relief in the more distant objects is particularly fine. Mengs adds, that these pictures were formerly in the Ludovico palace at Rome, and were a present sent to the King of Spain. Sandrart reports of this group of Cupids, that it served for a study to Domenichino, Poussin, and Fiamingo the sculptor. Albano has transcribed a part of this group into a composition of his painting, and there are two copies made by Rubens of these pictures to be seen in the palace : which Mengs in his criticism does not much approve of, and calls them Dutch translations.

There is likewise a particularly fine Titian on the subject of Tarquin and Lucretia, so naturally executed, that what between the excess of chastity in one of the persons and the notorious abuse of it in the other, it must be owned the lady has had a narrow escape.

Of scriptural subjects, treated by the hand of this great master, the Escurial presents a host of valuable examples. Only a few are found in the palace of Madrid ; the celebrated picture of the *Last Supper* in the refectory at the Escurial has been repeatedly described, and is known to all Europe as a master-piece of art.

In a letter, which is preserved from Titian to

Philip, he informs the King, that he had been seven years employed in painting it. This must surely be understood with latitude as to other intermediate compositions; for though the artist, as it is well known, lived to a very uncommon age, yet the life of a patriarch would scarce suffice to warrant undertakings of such labour, nor would the reward of two thousand golden scudi, which the King sent him by way of Genoa, and which was in fact a magnificent price in those times, be a proportionable compensation for the dedication of so great a portion of his time. The composition, which is called *The Glory of Titian*, that of *Christ in the Garden*, and the *Santa Margarita with the Dragon*, have often been described and duly praised; but the scrupulous sanctity of the monks was offended at some liberties taken by Santa Margarita in tucking up her robe, and discovering part of a very graceful leg; a thing not seemly to be done when in company with a dragon, especially as all dragons have not the prudence and good faith of that which was in keeping by the Hesperides; but Luca Jordano's rapid pencil pieced the petticoat, which now renders the lady fit to see company. This is the remark of Cumberland.

The letter of Titian to Philip, on the subject just referred to, is as follows:—

"TO HIS CATHOLIC MAJESTY PHILIP THE SECOND, MADRID.

"The *Supper of our Lord*, which I formerly promised to your Majesty, is now, by the grace of God, completed. I began it about seven years ago, and have laboured upon it almost continually, being desirous to leave to your Majesty, in this last stage of my life, the greatest proof of my early devotion to your Majesty that it is in my power to give. God grant that it may appear as good to your excellent judgment as I have endeavoured to make it, in the hope of giving you satisfaction. Your Majesty will receive it at an early day, consigned to your Secretary, Garzia Ernando, according to your commands. Meanwhile, I supplicate your infinite clemency, that if ever, at any time, any part of my very long services have been agreeable to you, you will deign to compassionate me; so that I may no longer be tormented by your Ministers, in receiving my allowance sometimes by an express from Spain, sometimes from the Chamber at Milan; that

I may live in more tranquillity for the few days which remain for me to spend in your service. And I trust your Majesty will not be less merciful to me than was the Emperor your father (of glorious memory) but will make your Ministers execute your benevolent orders, which towards me have always been so condescending, by which means I shall be freed from a thousand continually harassing cares, in striving to obtain my small pittance, and be able to spend the whole of my time in serving you with my labours, without being obliged to waste the greater part of it, as I am now compelled to do, in writing here and there to your different negociators, not without a very serious expense to me, and almost always in vain, or else receiving only some very trifling sum after a length of time. I am certain, most clement Sire, that if your Majesty knew in part the trouble I have had in this affair, your infinite piety would compassionate me; and peradventure would show some sign of your great benignity, in ordering a schedule to be written for me, as I assure you, that notwithstanding your goodness, I have never received any sum equal to your kind intentions, on account of their forms in paying me. And this is the reason that I am now obliged to seek relief at the feet

of my most Catholic Lord, supplicating your compassion to provide for my misfortune by some gracious expedient: so that you may no longer be wearied by my complaints, and that I may be in future freed from these vexatious cares, and enabled to employ myself wholly in your service.—I kiss your Catholic Majesty's hands. Your most devoted and most humble servant,

"TITIAN.

"Venice, August 5, 1554."

As soon as Philip had conceived the idea of enriching the Royal Convent with every thing suitable to the magnificence of its scale, and which the mines of America, that flowed in upon his treasury, could procure, he cast his eyes towards his father's favourite painter, Titian, then returned into his own country. Whether he solicited him to come again into Spain does not appear; but he had most certainly given him several commissions for pictures. In a letter which Philip writes to Titian, of the 13th of July 1558, from Ghent, he acknowledges the receipt of one from Titian on the 19th of the preceding month; and expresses the satisfaction it gave him to hear that he had completed his picture of Calisto, and

one also of Diana bathing. He tells him that he had written to Garcias Fernandez at Genoa, to forward these pictures to Spain, and desires Titian himself to superintend the packing and to direct the cases, that no other of his valuable productions might be again exposed to the like misfortune that had befallen his painting of the Christ, which had been ruined by the way. He earnestly requests Titian to restore that loss by another of the same composition, which he shall highly prize as coming from the hand of so great a master.

In conclusion, he expresses his regret to hear that the rents, settled upon him in Milan and Naples, had fallen into arrear, and tells him that he will put those payments in such a train, that there shall be no cause of complaint in future. This in effect he performed by a peremptory mandate to his Governor at Milan, directing him to satisfy the arrears due to Titian from the grants in 1541 and 1548, and to put the same in regular course of payment for the future, either from the ducal chamber or such other funds as might be more conveniently applied to that purpose. This mandate bears date the 25th of December 1558; and at the foot of it the King writes these lines with his own hand: "You know how I am interested

in this order, as it affects Titian; comply with it therefore in such a manner as to give me no occasion to repeat it." The King had the further attention to continue to him the grant of his key, and nominated him first painter of the chamber.

This was just at the time of the death of Charles the Fifth, his father.

For Queen Mary of England, wife of Philip the Second of Spain, Titian painted a Prometheus chained on Mount Causasus and torn by the Eagle of Jupiter, also a Sisyphus in the infernal regions, with the great stone, and Tityus torn by the Vulture. All these except the Prometheus are in the possession of King Philip; and also one of Tantalus of the same size, which is that of the life, painted on canvas and in oil-colours.

He also painted a Venus and Adonis. She is seated and endeavours to detain her lover: he is in the action of flying from her, with dogs in the fore-ground, wonderfully natural. In a composition of the same size, he painted Andromeda chained to the rock and delivered by Perseus from the sea-monster. No picture can have more grace than this. There is another of Diana at the fountain, accompanied by Nymphs, when she transforms Actæon into a stag. He

likewise painted a Europa carried over the Hellespont on the back of the bull.

These pictures are in the possession of his Catholic Majesty, and held in high esteem for the vivacity Titian has given to the figures; and in colour they are equal to nature itself. But it is certain that about this time he made a very great alteration in his style of execution from that which he practised in his younger days. For his first pictures are finished with most incredible diligence, so as to bear examining near, and yet look well at a distance also: but the works he did about this time are full of strokes and spots, after a certain bold manner, so that they seem nothing when viewed close, though they look well at a distance as if perfectly finished. This last manner of his many painters have endeavoured to imitate, by which they have made very gross and random work. They have been tempted to imagine it done with ease; but in this they are much mistaken, as it is the result of very long practice and vast judgment, earned from experience, and so far from being easy, that it is impossible to do it well without a long life of preparation. And as it demonstrates the great master of the art, the ignorant are captivated and conceive that it can be performed at will, not apprehend-

ing the infinite labour it has cost to acquire this seeming facility. If the painter should be asked how long he was about the picture done in so masterly and free a style, he might give the answer of one of the moderns on a similar occasion, to wit,—"All my life!"

About this period Titian painted a picture (three yards in height and four in breadth) of the Infant Jesus in the lap of the Virgin, adored by the Magi, with a multitude of figures, each three feet in height, exquisitely fine. He made also a repetition of this picture, which he gave to the old Cardinal of Ferrara.

"TO THE PRINCE OF SPAIN, AFTERWARDS KING OF ENGLAND, FROM TITIAN VECELLI.

"MOST SERENE PRINCE,

"From your Imperial Ambassador I received a gift more suited to your greatness than to my little merits. It was dear to me on many accounts, but most especially, because it is great riches to a poor debtor to be well thought of by his Lord. I in return wish I could paint the picture of my heart, which has been long consecrated to your Highness, that you might behold how perfectly your valorous image is there

engraved. But as this is not in my power, I am endeavouring to finish to my utmost the fable of Venus and Adonis,* in a form similar to that which you already have of Danae; and when it is finished (which it will shortly be) I shall send it. I go on preparing some others, which are also consecrated to my Lord.

"Since from my barren soul I cannot produce more noble fruit, I will not make any further professions; but pray our Lord God to grant all happiness to your Highness, and to me grace to be able once more to behold you and humbly to kiss your feet."

"TITIAN TO PHILIP, KING OF ENGLAND.

[Written about the year 1554, Ætat. 74.]

"MOST SACRED MAJESTY,

"I congratulate your Majesty with all my soul on the kingdom which God has granted to you; and I accompany my congratulations with the picture of Venus and Adonis, which I hope will be seen by you with the favourable eyes you used to cast upon the works of your servant Titian. And as the

* Engraved many times on copper. This picture or a duplicate of it is in the Palace of the Constable Colonna.

Danae I formerly sent to your Majesty was seen entirely in front, I wished in this other subject to vary the figure, and give the contrary point of view; and in the cabinet in which it is to stand, it will be more agreeable to the eye. I will soon send the poetical design of Perseus and Andromeda, which has also a point of view different from this; as also Medea and Jason. And I hope by the help of God to send, besides these pieces, a most holy subject, which has been in my hands these ten years, which, I trust, will show your Highness all the power that your servant Titian is able to employ in the art of painting. In the meanwhile, I have a reliance that the great King of England will deign to remember that his unworthy painter lives in the hopes of being servant to so mighty and benign a Lord; and that through his means he may acquire the favour of the most Christian Queen his Consort. Whom may our Lord God bless and preserve, together with your Majesty, that you may both continue to be happy for years and years, to bless the people whom you govern by his holy and gracious will!"

"TO SIGNOR DON GIOVANNI BENEVIDES, FROM TITIAN VECELLI.

"I do not know if the Signor Don Giovanni is become so proud with the new kingdom, which has increased the greatness of his King, that he will not any longer acknowledge the letters or pictures of Titian, whom he formerly loved. Still I cannot help believing that he will see both letters and pictures with a gay heart and joyful eyes that will feast upon them, because a man of taste, noble in blood, and most humane in his nature, as your Excellency is, becomes still more beneficent and caresses his servants still more, when he increases in authority and favour himself, so that he can help others. I hope then that I and my productions will be favoured by you more than ever: for, in short, I place all my hopes in the great King of England, through the intercession of my good Lord, the gentle Benevides, who I know can and will help me. I now send the fable of Venus and Adonis, in which your Excellency will see what spirit and ardor I infuse into my works done for his Majesty; and in a little time I shall send two other pictures, which will not please him less than this. They would have been finished by this time, only

that I have been hindered by the work I did for his Imperial Majesty. The picture of the Trinity I shall soon finish (as I am bound in duty and devotion) for her Majesty the Queen, which I will immediately send. I entreat your Excellency to write to tell me if his Majesty is pleased with the picture, and if he prizes it.

"I have nothing more that occurs for me to say; but to commend myself to your good graces and to kiss your hand.

"Venice, September the 10th, 1554."

CHAPTER XXI.

OTHER WORKS OF TITIAN SENT INTO SPAIN—PORTRAIT OF SIGNOR VARGAS—SONNET OF ARETIN'S UPON IT.

TITIAN had quitted the Court of Spain before Philip took possession of the throne. The arts however had rapidly advanced: Charles had made some improvements in the royal edifices, but more with a view to accommodation than magnificence. He had new-fronted the old palace of Madrid, beautified and repaired the venerable Alhambra of Grenada, planted and disposed the walks and avenues of Aranjuez in the Flemish taste, and built the Prado at two leagues' distance from the capital in a retired situation, and in a style by no means imperial. It is a square building of moderate dimensions, flanked with four small towers at the angles, and environed with a foss, exactly on the scale of a nobleman's seat in his native country.

Superstition soon engaged Philip in a more important undertaking; for having made a vow

upon the victory of St Quentin to dedicate a church and monastery to Saint Lorenzo, on whose day he had gained the battle, he began in the midst of a solitary and frightful desert to displace the rocks and compel them to take the shape of an edifice. On the feast-day of St George, with much temporal and spiritual pomp, he laid the foundation-stone of the monastery of San Lorenzo, called the Escurial, with the following inscription :—

DEUS O. M. OPERI ASPICIAT!
PHILIPPUS II, HISPANIARUM REX
A FUNDAMENTIS EREXIT
MDLXIII.
JOAN BAPTISTA ARCHITECTUS
IX. KA. MAII.

To proceed. Titian now sent a most excellent picture to Philip the Second. It is a *Cæna Domini* with the Twelve Apostles, a work of great size, being twenty-one feet long, and of a most extraordinay beauty. It was this picture which the King ordered to be cut less to fit a particular place, and which so much distressed the painter Il Mudo.

Besides all those which have been mentioned before in this account, there were in his house many just sketched, others more advanced ; to wit, the Martyrdom of St Lorenzo, a repetition

of the one above-described. This was to have been sent to the King of Spain. And on a very large canvas was begun a *Christ on the Cross* with the two thieves and the executioners below. This picture was for M. Giovanni de Arna. Also a picture begun for the Doge Grimani, father to the Patriarch of Aquileia. And for the saloon of the Grand-palace of Brescia he had begun three pictures, as mentioned by one Christofano, a painter of Brescia to ornament one floor of that palace. He had also begun many years before, by order of Alfonso, first Duke of Ferrara, a picture of a young man naked on his knees to Minerva, with another figure at his side. In the back-ground of the picture is seen the ocean with Neptune in his car; but from the death of that prince, at whose suggestion it was designed, it was never finished, and remained on the painter's hands. He also had begun and carried far on, though not absolutely finished, a picture of Christ appearing to Mary Magdalen in the Garden, the figures of the size of life; also another of the same size, in which are represented the Madonna and the two other Marys, with the dead Christ laid in the sepulchre. There was a similar picture of a Madonna, a beautiful work. In the same house was a portrait of himself that he had finished

about four years before, most excellent and natural. And lastly, a St Paul reading, half-figure, which seems filled with the Holy Spirit.

Besides those which I have mentioned, there were a multitude of others, which it would be tiresome to enumerate; and now being arrived at the age of seventy-five years, infinitely famous and fortunate, in a degree equal to any man living, not having had from heaven other than favour and felicity, his house in Venice was the resort of princes as well as of the learned and persons of distinction and ingenuity that visited or inhabited Venice; for he was not only a great painter but extremely well-bred and courteous, and he had now acquired so great a reputation by his works, that there was not a gentleman in Venice who did not procure a portrait or some other picture done by him. Most of the churches were adorned with his works.

In the time of Titian many persons of high quality at Venice practised the art of painting for their amusement. For instance, Monsignor Barbaro, patriarch-elect of Aquileia, a man of great worth and liberality, and the learned M. Francis Morosini, both of whom designed and painted elegantly; and among the infinite number of gentlemen who studied and delighted in the art was the magnificent M. Alexander Con-

tarini, highly distinguished by his polite literature and great abilities.

It is said that Titian painted Queen Mary for the Emperor Charles; but I do not know what Queen Mary it could be. He certainly never painted Queen Mary of England from the life, as she was never out of her kingdom, and Titian was never in it.

His works at Inspruck being finished, he returned to Venice, where he painted for the church of Santa Maria Nuova a small picture of the Annunciation. Afterwards, with the help of his scholars, he produced in the refectory of St John and St Paul *Christ at Supper;* and in the church of St Salvador, at the high-altar, the *Transfiguration of Christ* on Mount Tabor. At another altar in the same church is the *Annunciation of the Virgin* with the Angel; and although these last pictures have something fine in them, yet they were not much esteemed by himself; nor indeed have they that degree of perfection which is to be found in his earlier performances. But the works of Titian are very various, and particularly his portraits are numberless, insomuch that to make a catalogue of them is quite impossible.

He painted a most excellent picture of Christ mocked by the Jews. This was sent to Milan

and placed in the church of Santa Maria della Grazia in one of the chapels.

For the Queen of Portugal he painted a picture of Christ scourged at the pillar by the Jews; the figures a little less than life, and very fine.

In Ancona, for the high-altar of the Dominicans, he painted Christ on the cross. At his feet are the Virgin, St John, and St Dominic; a most masterly work, painted in his latter manner.

He also painted for the Crutched-Friars in Venice, at the altar of St Lorenzo, the Martyrdom of that saint. In the back-ground is a house filled with figures; the saint is stretched on the gridiron, under which is a great fire, and round it those who supply it with fuel; and as he has made it a night-scene, two of the attendants have flambeaux in their hands, which give light where it would not be given by the fire under the grate, though it is there exceedingly bright. There is also a stream of light or glory from Heaven, which breaks through the clouds and conquers the light of the fire or the flambeaux over the saint and all the other principal figures. The figures which are in the distance are illuminated by lamps placed near them. In short, the whole picture is conducted with con-

summate art, ingenuity, and judgment; and is certainly one of the most extraordinary works ever painted by Titian.

Mr Fuseli speaking of the management of light, gives examples from two pictures of Titian. He says, "The best instances of the advantages gained by the superinduction of artificial light, appear to be the Pietro Martire and the Saint Lorenzo of Titian; if selection can be made from the works of a master, where to count is to choose. In the first, the stern light of evening, far advanced in the back-ground, is commanded by the celestial emanation bursting from above, wrapping the summit in splendour, and diffusing itself in rays more or less devious over the scenery. The subject of Saint Lorenzo, a nocturnal scene, admits light from two sources —the fire beneath the Saint and a raised torch; but receives its principal splendour from the aërial reflex of the vision on high, which sheds its mitigating ray on the Martyr."

In the church of St Sebastian, at the altar of St Nicolo, is the picture of Saint Nicolo, seated in a marble chair. This figure is like life itself; he is attended by an angel who holds the mitre. This picture he executed by order of Master Nicolo Crasso, the advocate.

He afterwards painted a St Maria Maddalena

with dishevelled hair, which falls on her shoulders, neck and breast. It is a half-figure, and was sent to his Catholic Majesty. The expression of this figure is very fine; her head is in a raised position, her eyes red with weeping, and directed to heaven and filled with repentant tears: and although a figure of most excellent beauty, yet it fills the mind with commiseration only. When this picture was finished, it so much delighted one Signor Silvio, a gentleman of Venice, that he gave Titian a hundred crowns to have it: when Titian was obliged to make a repetition of it no less beautiful for his Catholic Majesty.

It was the custom of this great master frequently to repeat the same subject; sometimes by his own hand, and often by the hands of his disciples, who carefully copied the original; but he always retouched their performances, adding only a back-ground or some trifling alteration, by which management they had all the look of originals, and in all probability were very little or perhaps in no degree inferior, or might be superior, as he could correct the faults of the original in his copy.

"TO TITIAN VECELLI.

"I send you the underwritten Sonnet, com-

posed by me on the portrait of the illustrious Signor Francesco Vargas which represents all his dignity. You must imitate a card in the picture as if placed underneath, and then have it written by some person whose hand-writing is like your own, but written very distinctly. In the meanwhile I shall do in the same manner with the portrait of the most serene Duke Trevisano Marc Antonio, not as his sublimity merits, but as well as my humble genius will permit.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, October 1553."

Questo è il Varga depinto, e naturale
Egli e si vivo in la nobil figura
Ch' a Tizian, par che dica la natura
L' almo tuo stil, piu che il mio fiato vale
In carne io l' ho partorito mortale,
Tu procreato divino in pittura,
Il da te fatto la sorte non cura,
Il di me nato il fin teme fatale.
L' esemplo invero ha gli spiriti, e sensi
Raccolti in l' arte, e ch' il mira comprende
Cio, che allo Invece di Cesar conviensi
Nel guardo suo certa virtu resplende
Che con l' ardor di desideri intensi
Di Carlo in gloria ogni intelletto accende.

This is Vargas, painted by Titian so well,
That the noble figure appears to be alive.
Nature seems to say Thy excellent style
Is more worthy than the breath I give;
I have made him with an earthly and mortal body:
Thou hast in painting made him divine.
Thy Vargas fears not time or fate:
Mine each hour approaches nearer to his destined end.
Thy copy in truth has all the spirit and sense that art can give,
And the beholders perceive how worthy a
Representative it is of the envoy of Cæsar.
The countenance is resplendent with that virtue,
That ardour and intense desire of fame,
With which the glory of Charles inflames every noble spirit.

CHAPTER XXII.

OTHER PICTURES OF TITIAN — LETTER OF LUDOVICO DOLCE ON THE VENUS AND ADONIS — ACCOUNT OF THE SPANISH PAINTER, EL MUDO.

"TO THE MOST EXCELLENT M. ALESSANDRO CONTARINI.

"If I could as easily depict to your Excellency with my words the Adonis of Titian as you with a few of yours depicted to me the pictures of Raphael d'Urbino, I believe, without doubt, that you would say there never was any ancient or modern master who painted or imagined any thing of greater perfection. However as I do not know how to shade it out with my pen, it will be enough, if I do not deceive myself, to create in your apt mind an idea of this wonder in the same manner as once before my tongue produced this effect in the mind of M. Pietro Gradenigo, so that at night he dreamt of a picture of incomparable excellence; and the

day following, being willing to satisfy himself with his own eyes, went to see it, and found the effect of the original infinitely surpassed his imagination of it, and also that of my sketch.

"This history-piece of Adonis was painted a short time ago and sent by the good Titian to the King of England. But to begin with the figure. He has made it of a stature suitable to a boy of sixteen or eighteen years, well-proportioned, graceful, and charming, and in every part light and airy, with a fine complexion, plainly showing that he is extremely delicate and of royal blood; and we see in the air of the face that this wonderful master has endeavoured to express a certain engaging beauty, which though it participates of the female face, yet is not unmanly or effeminate. I would say that it is a lady with something I know not what of masculine beauty, or rather a man with all the beauty of a lovely woman, a mixture difficult, pleasing, and especially (if we may rely on Pliny) prized by Apelles. As for the attitude, one may see him move; and his movements are easy, gay, and elegant: for it seems that he is on his way, taking leave of Venus with the most ardent desire to go to the chase. In one hand he holds a hunter's spear, and to the other arm is fastened, in a masterly manner, a leash of dogs,

which are in three different attitudes, of such a beautiful form, and so naturally represented, that they seem to be barking and leaping and eager to attack their prey. The young man is dressed in a short drapery, reaching half-way down his legs, his arms naked. He is furnished with excellent buskins, tied with elegant strings of pearl, which shine and appear to be oriental. He turns his face to Venus with joyous laughing eyes, opening two rosy or rather coral lips, as if with kind and loving words to comfort her and beg her not to fear. The serenity of his countenance and the motion of his mouth plainly indicate the real state of his mind, and may well serve instead of words. One cannot discern in him that one part is more beautiful than another; because each part separately, as well as the whole together, contains the perfection of art. The colouring contends with the design, and the design with the colouring, in which painters are generally deficient; for it is not enough to know how to design figures ever so excellently, if the tints which ought to imitate flesh are spotty or earthy, or deprived of that union and tenderness and liveliness of spirit which we ever see in natural objects. However, we read in old accounts of the ancient painters, that some of them deceived birds and others horses. And

you know for excellence of design no one is superior to Titian. You may also be assured for a truth that in the other part of the art, which relates to colouring, no one equals him or ever will. But let us come to Venus. We see in this a superhuman judgment, because he had to represent a Goddess so formed as to give an idea of most surpassing beauty of body and mind; or to express it in a word, a beauty suitable to Venus, so that she might appear to resemble her who obtained the golden apple in Ida. This is to say at once that it has so much of the miraculous and heavenly in it that I assure you, so far from being able to describe it, I can hardly imagine it. Venus has her head turned side-ways, not from any failure of art, which some painters feel, but from a double degree of art. For in turning her face towards Adonis, endeavouring with both her hands to detain him, half-seated on a cloth of a rich violet-colour, she shows in every part sentiments so soft and lovely that they can never be seen except in her. And here is another wonderful piece of skill of this extraordinary genius, that in the lower parts he has shewn the pressure of the flesh which is caused by sitting. But what can I say of the workmanship; for each stroke of the pencil appears like one of the strokes made

by the hand of Nature herself! The aspect is exactly such as we may fancy that of Venus to have been (if Venus ever existed) in which appear manifest signs of the fear she felt at her heart of the unhappy fate which was likely to befal the youth. And if the Venus rising from the sea, painted by Apelles, which the ancient poets and writers praise so much, had half the beauty which is seen in this, she was not unworthy of their applause. I swear to you that one cannot find a man with an acute eye and a good judgment who seeing it would not believe it was alive. No one, however chilled by age or hard of heart, can see it without feeling all the blood in his veins warmed into tenderness; nor is it any wonder, for if a marble statue could charm and penetrate the heart of a young man with its beauty, what ought this to do which is really alive, is beauty itself, and seems to breathe? We find also in the same picture a landscape so beautiful and natural that reality itself seems not so real; where at the top of a small hill is a little Cupid asleep under a tree, the shadow of which falls directly upon his head, while all around him is in a wonderful splendour: the sun's rays illuminate and cheer the whole country. But all this which I have laboured to describe to you is trifling and little when com-

pared to the divinity (for no other word will suit it) of this picture. It is enough to say that it is by the hand of Titian, and done for the King of England. You will, I hope, deign to send me from time to time some of the charming fruits of your noble genius, which together with those exquisite letters which accompany them, adorn your rare and praise-worthy virtues.

"I remain,

"LUDOVICO DOLCE."

It is not to be understood that all the pictures of Titian, that are found in the royal collection of Spain, were painted by him whilst he was King's painter to Charles and Philip. Many are of an earlier period; and were either presented to the Crown or purchased in Italy, after the death of Titian. An instance of this occurred in the case of the famous pictures above-mentioned, extracted from the Ludovico Palace, which were a present to Philip. There is also in the Sacristy of the Escurial, a *Saint Sebastian*, in his best manner, which was given by the Count of Benevento: and several pictures of Titian were collected by the great Spanish painter Velasquez, in his excursion to Italy, by order of Philip the Fourth.

Whilst Philip the Second was thus solicitous to enrich his royal convent of St Lorenzo with the valuable works of Titian sent from Italy, his own kingdom of Spain offered to his choice many eminent professors and disciples in the art: the encouragement given to that great master, and the emulation of contemporary genius, roused into action by the study of his brilliant compositions, as well as by the introduction of other distinguished foreigners engaged in completing and adorning that vast fabric, operated to produce an Augustan age in Spain.

The most conspicuous of those at that period was Juan Fernandez Ximenez Noveratte, commonly called El Mudo or *The Dumb*, and generally acknowledged as the Titian of Spain. The defects of nature (for he was deaf as well as dumb) were in some degree compensated to him by a most quick and brilliant sense in the remaining faculties. He travelled to Florence, Venice, Milan and Naples, visiting many of the most famous academies; but principally forming himself in the school of Titian. This painter was employed by Philip to paint many parts of the Escurial, and was at work in that palace when Titian's famous painting of

the *Last Supper* arrived there. Upon Philip's proposing to cut the canvas to the size of the pannel in the refectory, where it was destined to hang, El Mudo to prevent the mutilation of so capital a work, made earnest signs of intercession with the King to be permitted to copy it, and reduce it to the size of the space allotted, offering to do it within the term of six months. The King, hesitating on account of the length of time required by El Mudo for the work, and proceeding to put his design in execution, El Mudo repeated his supplication in behalf of his favourite master with more fervency than ever, offering to complete his copy in less time than he at first demanded, tendering his head at the same time as the forfeit of non-compliance, and also laying his hand on his breast as a sign, that he claimed the order of Santiago as his reward, if he should succeed. The offer was not accepted, and summary execution was performed upon this famous work of Titian, accompanied with the most distressing attitudes and distortions of El Mudo. He died soon after at the Escurial, to the great regret of Philip, at the age of 40, or as some say 53, in 1579; and was honoured with an epitaph by Fra Lope Felix de Vega Carpio.

A more flattering homage could not be paid to any painter than that to Titian in being copied by so great a genius as Rubens. This happened when that artist was in Spain, in the retinue of our Charles the First, then Prince of Wales, when he paid his addresses to the Infanta, Sister to Philip the Fourth, and concluded (as he believed) a treaty of marriage. This great master was then in his forty-sixth year. He had before studied Paul Veronese and Titian at Venice with distinguished attention; the cabinets of Philip now displayed such superb compositions of these masters, particularly of Titian, as equally captivated both the painter and the Prince. Rubens, by order of the Catholic King, copied the Europa, the Bath of Diana, and several other pictures of Titian, which Charles (who from his early youth had a passion for the arts) had particularly admired. When these copies were finished, it was expected that Philip would present them to the Prince of Wales, and the compliment would surely have been one worthy both of Charles and his favourite artist: but the generosity of Philip meditated greater sacrifices, and in truth it scarce knew any bounds towards his princely guest: he retained the copies himself, and sent

Charles the originals. It is proper in this place to observe, that these valuable originals returned again to the possession of the King of Spain, when Charles, at the instigation of Buckingham, took occasion to dissolve his engagements with the Infanta—to reject the sister, and yet retain the presents of the Catholic Monarch, would have been a conduct irreconcileable to the spirit and character of the prince. Though his attachment to the arts was as ardent as any man's, he had the sentiments of a gentleman and pride of honour, superior even to his love of the art of painting. In the event of things, it has come to pass, that Charles, instead of taking from the Royal stock in Spain, has been the means of making some additions to it of the highest value.

In the year 1553, Titian returned to Venice, and was soon afterwards invited to Inspruck, being now in the seventy-third year of his age. Here he painted the portraits of Ferdinand, King of the Romans, afterwards Emperor, also his Queen and family, that is to say, Maximilian, afterwards Emperor, and his brother, all in one picture, which is said to have been one of his finest productions. He also painted the Duke of Saxony while he was a prisoner;

but, says my author, he probably lost his time in that affair. Certain it is that there was scarcely any person of much note, or prince or great lady, whose portrait he did not paint, the fame of his extraordinary merit in this department of the art was now become so general. He painted Francis the First, King of France, Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan, the Marchese Pescaro, Antonio de Leyva, Maximilian Stampa, Il Signor Giovanni Battista Castaldo, Alfonso de Ferrara, Federico Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, Francesco Maria, Duke of Urbino, the Marquis del Guasto, the Duke of Alva, Cardinals Bembo and Farnese, Fracastorio, Ferdinand, King of the Romans, and his son Maximilian, both afterwards Emperors, Pope Sixtus the Fourth, Julius the Second and Paul the Third, the Emperor of the Turks, Solyman, and the portrait of the Sultana, wife of the Grand Turk, when at the age of sixteen. Her dress and ornaments are extremely rich. This picture was in the possession of her daughter. He painted other portraits of persons and nobles not so famous, and numbers that are neither famous nor even known. We may, upon the whole, conclude that there never was a painter who was so much esteemed by princes

as Titian always was. See the force of supreme excellence, and let who will say to the contrary, merit never can rest long concealed; and every man possessed of it, if he governs himself with prudence, is the architect of his own fortune. But certainly one may say with the greatest truth, that there never was a painter who did greater honour to his profession than Titian. For knowing his own merit, he always esteemed his pictures of the highest value, not caring to paint unless for great persons, and such as were able to reward him properly for them. It is now impossible to recount all the portraits done by him, and which are of such excellence, that life itself scarce seems more alive; and it may be said of them, that it is they who look at you more than you who look at them. Such are his representations, for the most part of Emperors, Kings, Princes, or other illustrious characters. There never was a Cardinal or other person of consequence in Venice, that did not go to Titian's house to see his works, and sit to him.

"Many are the historical and fabulous stories which he painted," says Dolce; "works equally divine, whether considered with respect to design, colouring or invention. But I will re-

strain and moderate myself in his praises, both as he is my friend and companion, and he must be blind who cannot see the sun."

It is a proverb of the ancient Greeks, "That it is not given to all to go to Corinth." It may better be said that to paint like Titian is given indeed to few.

CHAPTER XXIII.

LETTERS TO MICHAEL ANGELO, INVITING HIM TO FLORENCE—INSTITUTION OF AN ACADEMY FOR PAINTING.

"TO THE DIVINE MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI.

"Of my not answering the last letter that I received from your Excellency, the whole fault is to be attributed to those troubles which from that time to this have been inflicted on me by Fate. These I endure with that degree of patience that I learnt from you, since it was here I first saw you, little knowing how much I ought, for my own interest, to adore your mind, if not your name.

"And now behold our houses, our cottages, our corn are burnt, and our flocks destroyed by the French. Yet I praise God for all things, but more especially that his Divine justice has decreed that this our territory of

Canaan should become the burying-place of their impiety; as it is well-known to the Divine Majesty, that our sins, if not visited by tribulation, always increase. But although I have lost my love for the country, yet you will see that I have not lost my affection for you, which is infinite. You know my heart, which I have always laid open to you without disguise. And I now, more than ever, desire not your greatness, which nothing can increase, but only the gratification of seeing you in bodily presence, before your soul quits us to join those kindred spirits that are the ornaments of heaven as good works adorn the earth. I repeat, that I hope you will give a look once more at this excellent country. Besides, the Duke will not desire any thing more than the pleasure of your conversation and the benefit of your advice, without fatiguing you with business. It would be of no little assistance to his Excellency; and to your own family it would be no small favour or advantage. Your Nephew, I believe, is fully convinced in his mind of the divine power breathing in the works of his great predecessor in sculpture, painting, and architecture. And when he saw you, he would give a loose to his tongue in thanks to you. But what I esteem as next

of importance is that of which I have been informed by Sebastiano Malenotte, your Secretary and the bearer of this letter, in regard to the extreme disrespect shown to you and your labours in the building,* which emboldens me to intreat you to leave those who do not know your merit. Can it be that your Excellency, who has liberated St Peter from the hands of thieves and assassins and brought an imperfect chaos to the highest perfection, should be thus treated? Most certainly, no mortal but yourself could have done what you have done. Therefore, my dear Sir, repose within your mind contented that you have been ever honourable and useful. Give some relaxation and rest to your honoured bones in this city, which gave you being. Fly from that avaricious Babylon, like Petrarch your fellow-citizen, who when oppressed by similar ingratitude, retired to peaceful Padua. I pray you do the same. I promise you quiet in Florence, if you come to her who flies to meet you. Perhaps, Sir, I am too bold in advising you, I who do not know how to live myself, to pretend to counsel your Excellency! Do not impute this to the anger I feel at my own labours not having been

* The building of St Peter's at the Vatican.

liberally rewarded; but I am enraged at those who are so insensible as not to know the good that God has done them through your exalted merit; as I esteem and adore all those who consider it as a blessing and acknowledge it, as Duke Cosmo now does, who, when I narrowly escaped flames and violence and plunder, almost naked, was willing to embrace me and to give peace to my troubled mind. And if to me, who am nothing in comparison to you, he has given so much that I am in want of nothing, what will he do for you, especially as you are neither avaricious nor ambitious? I believe that when you come here, you will think you are approaching Paradise. And if envious and malignant tongues should say that we live here in darkness and vulgar errors, we answer that for those who do not love peace and justice, and seek occasion for hatred and treachery, it may be the Temple of Satan: but for those who walk in the paths of virtue, they live in the favour of our Prince and also in the favour of God, who has made him Duke, and who for this reason guards him, and fights and conquers for him. But I will no longer tease your Excellency or distract your mind, that is ever active and resolved with the same firmness, with which my spirit adores your

actions and your virtues. Remember me kindly to Urbino,* I wish him and you joy of the little son that God has sent him. May you live happy!

"GEORGIO VASARI.

"Florence, August 20th, 1554."

"TO MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI.

"MOST MAGNIFICENT SIR,

"All the patronage and all the favours shewn to the arts of design in their time by the magnificent Cosimo or Lorenzo of Medicis, Leo the Tenth, Clement the Seventh, or all their house before, have now been surpassed, my good Master Michaelagnolo, by our Duke Cosmo, not in the arts alone, but in every other way of munificence, dignity, and grandeur, which he continually displays, not only as lord and master, but as protector and father of us all, assisting those that in works of ingenuity are not able to proceed without the help and succour of others.

His Excellency (as perhaps you have been informed) has established a foundation for the study of all the fine arts in one college; that is

* Urbino, a faithful servant of Michael Angelo, to whom a son was just born. Michael Angelo was god-father to the boy.

to say, design, architecture, sculpture, and painting; and has given most liberally for that purpose the Temple of the Scali in Pinti, and the Chapter-house of the Nunziata, which will be ready in a very short time, when the artists will have the whole management, with privileges that contain all that is required towards the amplification and aggrandisement of the arts, or to enable students to arrive at a perfect knowledge in their profession. With a view to give spirit to the youths, there is to be a school of drawing for them, and a visitor to direct them and to inspect their works, in order to forward their studies. And for the old artists who are past the period of labour, his Excellency has (for the benefit and honour of us all, and to his own immortal memory in this world) provided an infirmary, where they may in retirement cultivate divine knowledge, to the end that they may live like Christians, and among them do many acts of charity till they fall into the grave; and I wish that a thousand blessings may attend them.

"And to compose this body of a rtists it is intended to make a selection of the most excellent in each profession, thus giving them a proof of their superior abilities; and these are to have the title of Academicians, after they have been

confirmed by his Excellency the Duke. It is not intended to confine the members to this city only, but that all the world may partake of this most honourable distinction ; and therefore strangers may enjoy the same privileges as ourselves. And to add the more to the aggrandisement of the arts, it is the pleasure of his Excellency that each of the persons in succession who shall govern this city should be its head ; and that it might not lower this dignified lord in aggrandising the arts, he is to have the title of either Prince, Father, Lord, Protector, Defender, or Conservator of the Fine Arts, or Principal Academician. This has been accordingly done by the votes of the whole body of the members of the Academy. And after having voted him in, they, from the obligations which art owes to your superior powers, have elected you for the head and master by consent of all suffrages, not having in this city nor perhaps even in the world, at least in our memories, one more excellent in these three professions. You gained it to the entire satisfaction of all without a dissentient voice.

" There remained besides yourself thirty-six Academicians that were natives of this city or the Tuscan dominions : all persons of talents and competent judges of all kinds of works of inge-

nuity. Of this number twenty-two dwell in Florence. And because his Excellency designs that this his honourable foundation should produce good fruit, after having with due consideration and much solicitude, many times and by various modes, as you well know, endeavoured to induce you to return to Florence, he now hopes you will comply not only to assist by your counsel in those works, which do much honour to the Duke, having been undertaken by his order, under his government, and in his own dominions, but more particularly to make a finish by your excellent directions to the Sacristy of St Lorenzo. For since your unavoidable absence from the work, no orders have been given to complete it. And at this time it is matter of general consideration whether this chapel should not, according to the desire of Pope Clement the Seventh, be the place whence perpetually both day and night praises should be offered to God. It is also under consideration, whether statues to fill the empty niches above the monuments (and the same over the doors) should not be executed. Therefore it is proposed that all the most excellent sculptors of this academy should, each of them in competition with one another, make a statue of his own invention. And the same is to be done in

respect to the pictures in the chapel in those arches, which you see, great Sir, you have yourself intended, as well as the stucco and other ornaments. In short, the Academicians with all humility wish to finish this undertaking to show on such an occasion the honour they pay to genius, and not to leave in an unfinished state a work that is the most rare that was ever produced by a mortal.*

"It is at the command of his Excellency that I address you, my good Sir, to inform you of his desire, and from him to beg you would do him the service to inform either his Excellency or me of what was your intention or that of Pope Clement, concerning the title of the chapel, and the intention of the figures that are to fill the four niches, that belong to the tombs of the Duke Lorenzo and Duke Giuliano, and the eight statues that are to be over the door and the niches at the sides of them. Also your intention and design for the pictures for the chapel, principally the front and the arches. For his Excellency will touch nothing of that which you have done; and is only desirous that whatever is done should be done wholly from

* The Chapel of St Lorenzo at Florence, in which are the bodies of all the Princes of the House of Medicis. But those statues and pictures were never finished.

your order; and in truth, the whole body of this Academy joyfully desire it may be so. I am commanded also to say, that if you have a sketch or any part of the designs made for it, and would accommodate us with it, the service it would be of to us would not be small, but would be an assurance to his Excellency of a proper execution of the work, and be attended with honour—or if you should not be able to do this, on account of age or other accidents, at least deign to send a description of it by another hand, because this honorable Academy may misunderstand the matter, and having to operate on a work begun by you, may, by not having some light given them by your great mind, do that which was not according to your intent; therefore they all expect to have the benefit of your counsel, and if not by acts, at least by words. And his Excellency having a desire that the work should be finished according to your original design, has given commissions to Tribolo Montelupo and to the Frate * orders to execute some of the statues. The Frate, and indeed all of them here, are most ardent and desirous to do you honour. There are, besides these, Francesco with Giuliano Sangalli, and Gio

* F. Gio Angiola Montorsoli.

Bologna, Benvenuto l'Ammannato, and Rossi, and Vincentio * Perugino, besides many other sculptors of great merit. As painters, there are Bronzino and many other most excellent masters, together with a great many young men of merit and cleverness in both drawing and colouring, and whose figures with their attitudes do them honour. Of myself I do not speak; as you know, most excellent Sir, that in obedience, affection, love, and faith (this I may say without disparagement to the rest) I may boast of being before them all, at least in point of time. Therefore, my good Sir, if you do condescend to assist his Excellency and this worthy and ingenious Society with your advice, and to do honour to this city, pray do this favour particularly through my hands; because his Excellency has deputed to me the office of writing to you, thinking that from your long friendship to me we might have from you some valuable information that may be useful to the work: since it is his Excellency's will, desire, and order, that every thing begun by you shall remain as if finished, and that all the expense of money and labour shall be only to do the greater honour to this admirable although old

* Vincentio Dante.

building by the additional works, and also help to explain your excellent intentions. And since there is not one of us that has not in this Sacristy (or rather I may call it our school) learnt all that he knows of the art; therefore, with a grateful mind, they are desirous with all their labour and talents to make you the best return that is in their power. I am on all their parts desired to say that they adore you, and pray for your health and long life: and with this I shall finish my epistle, recommending myself to you, good Sir, a thousand times.

" Georgio Vasari.

" Florence, March 17th, 1562."

The new Sacristy of the chapel in which the remains of the Medici are deposited, in the church of Saint Lorenzo at Florence, was executed by Buonarotti, between the years 1525 and 1529, by order of Clement the Seventh. In this chapel Michael Angelo emulated the architecture of the old Sacristy, designed with the rest of that church by the celebrated Philippo Brunelleschi; and he lavished on this work the wonders of his art with such success, that according to Vasari, the seven statues which adorn the monuments of Guliano and Lorenzo di Medici, the brother and nephew of Leo X.

might alone be sufficient, if the art were lost, to restore it to its pristine perfection. The same historian and excellent artist adds, that in general the effect produced by Buonarotti in the Sacristy is such that the eye can never be wearied or satiated; and that for this reason many Latin and Italian verses were made in its praise by the *literati* of that period.

At the funeral of Michael Angelo at Florence, after the prayers of the church had been offered to heaven for the repose of his soul, Benedetto Varchi, a friend of the deceased, mounted a tribunal, and delivered a funeral oration. All the ceremonies were extremely solemn and magnificent. The Church of St Lorenzo was chosen as the place of celebration, because in that church there were so many instances of Michael Angelo's abilities as a sculptor and an architect.

Varchi died at the age of sixty-three, in the year 1565. He wrote the History of Florence, from 1527 to 1538. It is a faithful but tedious chronicle. It was not published till the year 1721; for like the histories of Segni and Nerli, it was withheld from the public out of respect for particular families.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ON THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF ART IN ENGLAND AND ITALY.

That love of country, that *amor patriæ*, which is so obstinately cherished by every other nation, is by ours given up in this one point, *to wit*, in readily assenting to the opinion which foreigners entertain, that Englishmen have no genius for the fine arts, particularly that of painting; and we are tired out by the unpatriotic cant, echoed from every quarter, of the superior excellence of foreign, and more especially the Italian masters, whose names are pronounced with flippant familiarity; and the lofty powers of Raphael, Correggio, Domenichino, and the Caracci are enumerated and extolled by every English connoissieur, to stop the presumptuous tongue of English arrogance, when it vainly pretends to assume the possibility of an equality in native genius.

When questions are thus begged, the best mode of argument is by a resort to other questions. Ask those, who vaunt this opinion, how they are able to prove the vast superiority of foreigners, or if they have seen with their own eyes those works of which they boast a knowledge? When the most honest among them, if not witnesses for themselves, will answer, that their information has been gained from those who have sufficient knowledge of art to know its truth, and who have seen in profusion the very works of which they speak, and in the very country in which they were produced. This, we must allow, is high authority.

I would next ask where those works are to be seen? The answer to be given, with a becoming exultation, will be, that you cannot walk five steps in any street in any town in all Italy, without finding a church-door open; and if you will but deign to enter, you must be struck with altar vying with altar for superiority of excellence, and the works of Raphael, Caracci, Guido, Domenichino, &c. will quickly regale your sight with almost oppressive abundance; and convents, chapels and palaces will still have their share.

In Venice also, as I have before observed, that emporium of trade and commerce, besides

churches, convents, chapels and palaces, every fraternity or corporation will boast that they possess the works of Titian, Giorgione, Tintoretto, or Paul Veronese; and that their country's wars, its heroes, or its saints, are the ornaments of every public hall: and surely the excellence of those specimens is past all dispute. Here the evidence closes on one side. But sentence should not be passed without a fair trial; I would therefore desire those severe and hasty judges, before they pronounce the terrible verdict of inferiority on English powers, first to visit all *our churches, chapels, palaces,* and *public halls:* and, as it has been in similar places in other countries, that the most perfect specimens of art have been seen, let them, after they have surveyed those dreary and vacant walls, where art must not intrude, let them, I say, pronounce sentence, if they dare!

English genius can then have but little doubt of escaping their dread condemnation, were it only from the occurrence of a single difficulty, which as they will find, involves the question in impenetrable obscurity, and prevents all power of comparison, of greater or less, better or worse—inasmuch as British genius has never been put to the proof, nor has any

opportunity been afforded for its development like those in Italy.

Thus far I have presumed in vindication of English talents, which ought not to be so hastily condemned till they have undergone a trial; I hope also that I have shewn the cause why such a trial has never been given them; for if it had, I have but little doubt of a favourable result. Indeed, I will go further, and say that from the pre-eminence that Britons have obtained in every department of genius where the field has been open to them, and also from that solid good sense which is a characteristic of the nation, there is no question remaining but that they would have surpassed all the nations of the earth in painting, had the requisite demand been made to call their efforts into action. For however daring or great may be the mind of an English painter, he will only be employed to furnish pretty pictures for small gay rooms, and not such as are to strike with religious awe in solemn cathedrals—pleasing toys to amuse the idle, adorn the dressing-room or warm parlour, not magnificent works for the halls of magistrates, chambers of grand councils, or galleries of princes.

It would be a mere absurdity to suppose that

the Italian people are better qualified than the English, or that they had even a greater propensity towards the arts. It was interest alone that was the cause of their rise in Italy, and not a love of the arts in that people more than in any other country. And could the fine arts in England, by any contrivance be brought to aid the power of the Government as much as the rotten boroughs, we should soon see them patronised to such a degree as would quickly cause them to "mount to the highest heaven of invention."

The arts, when on a great scale, must always be the servants and dependents on the government under which they thrive; and are employed not for their own sake, but to forward the interests of their masters. Interest alone has been the cause of their encouragement by any government in any age, and not (as some imagine) the love or admiration of the art itself.

It was the interest of the Romish Church to impress its subjects by every means in its power with an awful conception of the mysteries of their religion, which it claimed the sole privilege of inculcating. And the chapel of the Pope, in which is displayed the representation of the Last Judgment, with colossal figures of prophets and sybils, by the hand of Michael Angelo, strikes

the mind (as was foreseen) with profound reverence.

All governments, from their nature, act the same; and our own is not exempt from this rule. As we see that in place of the Last Judgment our artists have to represent something relative to the battle of Waterloo, &c. and instead of saints and holy apostles, which fill Catholic cathedrals, ours are supplied with sculptured heroes of our army and navy, and in such prodigious abundance, that at first sight the church in which they are clustered together has the appearance of a sculptor's work-shop. But paintings, unluckily, are not considered as of any use to the purposes of Government in this country, and therefore that department of art is neglected, and left to shift for itself. For as to the patronage of private individuals, it cannot be expected that even the seven Cartoons by Raphael, or twenty more if added to them, could vie in interest with the portrait of the husband, the portrait of the wife, the child, the horse, the house, the garden, or the dog of the employer; and of course for these luxuries the demand is perpetual and unlimited, and thousands of artists, of all degrees of ability, find by it a decent maintenance.

On the politic revival of the arts in Italy, although at first appearing in weak and imperfect efforts, yet the pleasure excited by the novelty alone much assisted their progress. The phenomenon struck the astonished world with wonder, veneration, and delight: it seemed to produce a new era in the creation; and thus admiring and adoring crowds called forth a degree of emulation in the artists equal to its cause, and what might not be expected from such motives. The patronage soon became immense: every church was void of those ornaments, and every altar was to be supplied; and genius thus became animated by the united force of ambition, enthusiasm, and interest; and artists, unawed by critics, brought all their energies to a focus, producing works which seemed to be beyond the powers of man. But the fascinating qualities which novelty possesses are soon set aside by time. The churches at length were filled; and works of art, from their frequency, ceasing to be matter of wonder, they therefore operated with less effect, and were less the object of attention: for mankind will not be surprised more than once with similar results. However, it is to be remarked that the high credit which so much excellence had acquired, still assisted by the powerful prejudices of religion, kept the

arts alive some time after most of the public places had been occupied, and votaries of superstition still required works of art to furnish oratories and private apartments with the representations of grand and awful events, such as they had been accustomed to contemplate, and such as are best suited for the pencil of great masters. But this state of the arts also had its period. The vulgar became familiarized to it, and assumed the importance of the critic and the judge, exacting fresh miracles to draw their notice and respect. But what power was ever able to satisfy the unlimited demands of ignorance? which, like a froward child, rejects the toy it possesses and cries for something new, though not of half the value. Thus the ill-fated arts, being deprived of their proper and wonted nourishment, naturally sunk by a slow and gentle decay till they seemed again to expire. As we may perceive that in their present state, even in Italy itself, in the very bosom of that church which caused their re-animation, and gave them a second existence, scarcely a semblance in point of excellence can be found, nor in the degenerate offspring can we trace a distant likeness to the parent. Fallen from the dignity of being the teachers and directors, they are become the instruments of pleasure only or

the ministers of vice. If such is their degraded state even in Italy, what can be expected from modern efforts in other countries, where works are executed under a patronage (if such it can be called) at once both scanty and precarious? Perhaps some private individual, influenced by the whim of the moment, or else some tasteless dealer, whose sole view is gain, gives a casual commission for a work, but effects from such causes can manifest only the stunted growth of avarice or folly—*Nothing can come of nothing.*

Having now delivered my opinion as to the true grounds on which the art depends for splendour or even existence, I shall proceed to make some observations on its present state, together with such directions and cautions as may be useful to those who have determined to devote themselves to the service of this dying art; which, if it can be revived from its actual state of palsy, will exhibit a most wonderful recovery, as I do not perceive how it is possible in a country like this, in which paintings are not to be admitted into our churches or into any other of our public buildings, and where unluckily a prejudice runs too strongly in favour of the productions of foreigners—I do not perceive, I say, where it can fly for help or support sufficient to maintain it in credit or affluence.

I come then to consider the situation of that artist, whose greatness of mind still supports him under all disadvantages, with a distant hope of good;—one who may be endowed with the highest degree of intellectual power, combined with the largest portion of acquired knowledge, and aided by mechanical dexterity. Such a one will feel most keenly the narrow boundary which this limited patronage prescribes to him, in which he is to exercise his skill. Other obstacles still interrupt his way. For instance, certain it is that all those subjects for his pencil, wherein might be displayed that object, considered by painters not only as the master-work of nature, but also that of the highest difficulty in art to execute with knowledge and with taste, *viz.*—the human figure, or as termed by artists, the *naked*—these, by vulgar opinion, are strictly forbidden unless on great and rare occasions. Indeed, too true it is, that the natural proneness of mankind to evil renders those subjects of a most dangerous tendency. This consideration operates on a moral painter as a powerful prohibition: for he well reflects that such objects (more so in this country from their novelty) would not be viewed with innocence of thought, simply as a beautiful figure in nature, nor admired as a

powerful effort of art. But when seen by minds prepossessed by other ideas, they become the baleful minister of vice; and like the pure element of water, when given to the fevered body, turn to a deadly poison. This is a truth, the effects of which artists cannot but lament, it having deprived the world of so many excellent works in art which it might otherwise have possessed.

The genuine artist next looks round in search of subjects fit for the purposes of a mind that abhors insipidity. His wish is to awaken the drowsy intellect by objects of the highest order, and to move the passions by a display of corresponding energy. Terror and pity are all the engines that are left him to work with. But to make use of these, he has his fears. So rude an attack on the sensations of those who expect gratification alone, may create disgust or produce anger, like that of one disturbed out of a pleasing dream. Therefore, the artist hesitates, or rather dares not make use of means so hazardous. Circumspectly must he shape his conduct not to incommode his guests with too much pleasure or with too much pain; be careful not to make his potion too bitter or too sweet; with prudence compose his gentle cordial that his patient feel neither good nor harm; pre-

pare a kind of chicken broth for weak stomachs; and find out some trivial subject for his powers, in which there is no character, "no form nor likelihood." Circumscribed as we now see him by his judges and their prohibitions, and deprived of so large a portion of those subjects which address the mind, the artist is obliged to have recourse to those which address the eye only, but leave the heart untouched; and his work must depend for its value on the merits of his executive power alone, and perhaps the more insipid the subject, the more it will meet with the general suffrage. However, he must in this case avail himself as well as he can of the scanty means left in his hands, and select with care such subjects for his pencil as by the variety and contrast of their details are calculated to produce the best effect on canvas, or what painters term the *picturesque*. Having submitted to so many limitations, he must now assert his few remaining rights. His first consideration, therefore, must be to make his work excellent by his knowledge and powers in his art. He is to select his subject with a painter's eye, and not regard himself as bound to take precisely that particular part or event which is the principal one in his author (whether historian or poet) unless he finds it peculiarly

adapted to his talents. He is to look upon himself as totally independent of those merits which perhaps may have given his author fame, and should remember that it is on his own excellence that his credit must depend. By this means alone he can acquire or deserve applause; and by this means alone he can bring the force of his art to the best account; and when employed upon a subject where the imagination should have its full scope, he must not be liable to the control of individual opinions or interference. Listen he should to all that can or may be said, and then left with full liberty to act from his own judgment; for, being in a state of exertion, a necessary confidence in himself is required to carry him safely through his difficult undertaking. The painter is to remember it is only himself who best knows the extent of his own powers, and how to apply them to the best advantage: and to trammel him with directions is to disable him from the use of his talents, and if he is prevented from giving his own ideas, it is very unlikely he should be able to give those of others.

The patron, however sensible, will frequently give his instructions like a novice in art, because he has not studied it like a professor:

and the young practitioner perhaps, in hopes to gain the advantages of his favour, will be induced, in contradiction to the dictates of his own better feelings, to adopt the errors and prejudices of a blind guide. But let him never forget this truth, that if his work is contrary to his own judgment and taste, he will find very few else who will be satisfied with it. This must be particularly the case, should he follow the advice of one who perhaps sees no distinction between the operations of the hand and those of the mind, often mistaking the cold, vapid and unnatural efforts of dry mechanical labour for the most perfect effects of high finishing, being unable to discriminate the difference between labour to the purpose and labour worse than lost.

When I say this, let me not be mistaken in my meaning or be thought to encourage carelessness or a slighted execution: for although it is the mind alone that can give the highest dignity to art, yet the hand also ought to be made perfect; and undoubtedly, the painter's first business is to please the eye, and then to touch the heart. He is to afford both pleasure and improvement to the mind. To accomplish which, it is requisite that he should make himself master of those parts of the art which delight

the eye; for as he is under the necessity of making his first appeal to the sight, if that is not gratified, the spectator turns from the work in disgust and condemns the whole as ill-done, and the mind will not allow itself time to discover or investigate the latent excellences which may be contained in it. Therefore, the eye must be humoured as you would the lackey of a great man, when you desire to gain admittance to the presence of his master.

As an address to the imagination is the principal and highest office of the art, the painter in the treatment of his subject is to consider himself as a poet, and not a mere historian or antiquary: and when it thwarts his great design, he must not be slavishly bound down to give literal information or the trifling circumstances of costume or antiquarian research. Those things are held as the means only, not as the end. The painter's great business is to move the nobler passions and affections by the best means in his power, otherwise he sinks into the mere relater of a fact; and that also with very limited and inadequate materials to attain the end. By conforming to such practice, painting would no longer be the sister of poetry nor even of history, but rather the hand-maid. Painting, considered as history, is very con-

tracted in its powers; but as poetry, it is almost unbounded.

The painter, who justly comprehends what are the first requisites in his work, will with propriety and a due subordination add all those lesser qualities; as there is no question but that all historical information that can be given without infringing on the first and most important excellences, will increase the value of his labours. But he, who aims at standing in the highest rank of his art, or whose first desire is to touch the soul, will remember that they are subordinate and of a mean and inferior quality, by as much as mere industry or dry acquired knowledge is below genius or invention.

But it is also necessary to guard against falling into an error which is totally the reverse of the former. There is a class of painters, and some of them not without talent, who, from an abhorrence to *common-place* ideas, and to avoid them in their works, have adopted novelty in the place of invention; having persuaded themselves to confound it with excellence, and in their capricious designs are fond of introducing such extravagances as indeed are new and never before seen in picture. But, why are they new? Not because they had never been thought of before, but that when they were

thought of by judicious painters, they had been rejected as unfit materials for the pencil to work upon. Yet such artists are not without their little party of admirers, and that even to enthusiasm amongst the weak-minded! The novelty, the bombast, the violation of all simplicity and nature, strike with force on puny imaginations, as frightful tales and romances of every kind do on children. But to such admirers no regard is to be paid, as being totally unable to feel or comprehend the exquisite beauties and high difficulties which are atchieved in those profound and powerful works of art, where the truth and simplicity of nature is so unostentatiously displayed, that to their ignorance it seems no longer art, and as if nothing arduous had been done, though the accomplishment of this is the greatest of all difficulties. Even simply to represent in painting a passing moment or what the poet calls "the Cynthia of a minute," though it may seem trifling to the uninformed, is one of the hardest tasks in the art: on the contrary, that which painters distinguish by the term of *still-life*, namely, the imitation of things stationary and inanimate, is the most easy to be accomplished. The first gives you that which lasts but for an instant; the latter represents the unchanged

duration of hours, with full time to touch and retouch, and where there is no instantaneous beauty to be caught and executed with "heedless haste and giddy cunning."

Another species of subjects I shall speak of, as I am apt to think that too much merit is ascribed to them, or rather that their degree or rank is not justly settled, by which not only the spectator is deluded, but the student is misled to his hurt. I mean to instance all those compositions which, from their nature, require a multiplicity of figures, battle-pieces, &c., for it is to be remarked that in such complicated subjects the attention is so distracted, that great errors may and often do creep in unobserved. For all that exquisite distinction of character or exact discrimination in the expression of the passions, which works of the highest order absolutely require, would in those instances be lost or undiscernable in the mighty bustle which makes up the whole. You cannot distinguish the superiority of a wise man over a fool when mixed in a crowd. Consequently, compositions of this kind seldom contain, and perhaps scarcely require, any higher degree of merit than that of a masterly execution in handling, added to a few other parts of the art, such as may be acquired by those of a

very moderate portion of ability. For it is the test of genius or good sense to prove with how few figures it is able to tell its story. And I should give it as my advice to students in the art, always to compose their historical designs with as few figures as possible, admitting that their subject be fully explained; and also that their figures should be large in proportion to the size of their canvass. The reason is this, that it will the better enable them to display the greatest difficulties and the highest refinements of the art, which are most assuredly comprised in the human figure. Faults too are more easily overlooked when the work is slightly executed, or if the figures are numerous or small.

An experimental lesson of most useful tendency would be to attempt to tell the story even with one solitary figure, after the example of Michael Angelo, if it be within the bounds of possibility (or at least with such an intention in the mind). This method would oblige the student to give the figure the most decided contour with precision of form and drawing, energy of expression, and every characteristic mark which may be required towards its explanation. It must force him to apply to those things only for assistance, which

are of essential importance to his work, and will prove at the same time how necessary it is to keep clear of all impertinent and trivial matter, such as might confuse or perplex the subject, or lead the spectator to mistake it for what was not designed and be deceived into a wrong conclusion. An historical picture, like an enigma or riddle, should have this property, that if on viewing it the specific subject is not made determinate, at least it should not be found to answer exactly to something else.

It is surprising how partial every nation, except our own, is to their artists; a Dutchman will prefer the high finish of his Mieris and Gerard Dow, his Ostade, and Berghem; the Fleming will celebrate his Rubens and Vandyke, Teniers and Rembrandt; the Frenchman wil boast of his Le Brun, Le Sueur, Bourdon, and dispute the merit of his Poussin even with Raphael; while the Italian looks on them all with contempt. And even in Italy every province contends for the precedence of its own school against that of all the others; whilst the Englishman is pleased with every thing that is not the production of England.

The productions, as well as the tastes of different countries, have their several merits; as the painters of different countries had different views, and derived their manner of painting from their particular circumstances. The Italian, and some of the Flemish painters, who embellished churches, large palaces and cielings, as their works were to be viewed at a great height, were under a necessity, by the force of their colouring, the strength of their lights and shadows, and boldness of their style, to produce great effects, whilst the eye, at so great a distance, gave the proper union and harmony to the whole; which in part vanished at a near approach. This union and harmony, the Dutch painter, who only supplied the ornaments for a rich tradesman or merchant's room, was obliged to procure with the neatness of his pencil: as his pictures, which were generally small, hung close to the sight. But such pictures must offend, if painted like the Italian, by the fierceness of their colouring and the roughness of their surface, which contracted nature never admits; as any man may be convinced that will but use a proper glass. Therefore this partiality to the productions of their own country, as it is built on a just foundation, has

something in it highly commendable, if not carried to too great an excess. Though partial to our own, we ought not to be blind to the excellences of others.

But this is not the case with our modern connoisseurs. Impartiality is not their foible: they, on the contrary, obstinately shut their eyes to the merit of their own countrymen only; and whilst they discover imaginary beauties in every thing that is foreign, endeavour to close up all avenues to the advancement of the arts in their own country (I will not add sciences, for in those they are generally too ignorant to interfere, and in those, by the force of genius, we luckily excel). And so confirmed are they in their prejudices, that they will not endeavour to know what is praiseworthy in their own country.

It must be observed that our modern *virtuosi* have not the excuse their predecessors had; for, notwithstanding the imputation of *grossierté* they have been pleased to bestow on their own countrymen so freely, the good sense and judgment allowed them by all nations have enabled them to excel even in the art of painting.

Whoever shall examine most of the pictures

offered to sale under great names, and compare them with nature, will not be a little surprised at the assurance of those that aim at and too often succeed in such gross impositions; and pass off paltry copies or often originals, whose beauties are either so lost by time, or totally effaced in cleaning, that the buyer pays for the venerable canvas or board, merely as a relic the devout hand of some great master was laid on: or else so painted over, that the real charms, like those of a French courtezan, are entirely hid beneath the artificial repairs.

But what contributes to keep up the deceit, is the vanity of several of those distinguished by the title of connoisseurs, who are generally men that travel; and not having vivacity enough to join in the gaieties of the sprightly part of the world, or judgment enough to make those useful and interesting remarks which are necessary to the knowledge of mankind, to keep up their importance, they assume the character of arbiters in *virtú*, as it is called, though perhaps all their knowledge consists in a few hard names and as many hard words, which they throw out with great gravity and superciliousness: and being used to look at pictures grown dark with age, smoked in

churches with lamps, or stained and altered by damps, mistake those defects for beauties, and enslaved by their prejudices, look with contempt on the clearness of colouring and the brightness of nature that shines through a modern picture: while the man of real taste, not caring to stem the torrent of nonsense, leaves them to carry on the farce without controul.

Italy was long embroiled in all the calamities and disasters of war, while contending tyrants, elected by different bands of soldiers, strove for empire; to which succeeded the incursions of barbarians from the north, who destroyed them, and made prize of the spoil. Next followed the struggles of these with other northern hordes of intruders equally savage, together with their contests with each other, in masses and then in fragments, into which they became divided, but yet not less active in the work of mischief. This country of Italy, therefore, although blest by nature in its climate, became peopled by those only who had neither mind nor leisure left but what was wholly occupied in contrivances for the absolute preservation of their physical existence. And many concurring circumstances contri-

buted to the decline of true taste, besides the irruptions and long residence of those barbarous nations in the most cultivated parts of the peninsula. The removal of the seat of empire from Rome to Constantinople, and again, the taking of Constantinople by those enemies of art, the Turks,—all these together oblige us to leave a long chasm betwixt the glorious days of the Roman empire and the dawn of art again in Tuscany in the fifteenth century, when the evil seemed to have worn itself out, and the fermentation in some degree subsided into settled government.

The inhabitants now felt themselves blessed with a small degree of quiet, and by that means in a condition to cultivate the enjoyments of intellect. It was from the stores of the Greek and Latin churches that the monks had preserved the seeds of many arts, particularly the art of design, though in a very imperfect degree, but still sufficient, by cultivation, to produce effects of the greatest magnitude. In respect to the progress of refinement in Italy, it must be observed, that the little republic of Florence gave birth to many restorers of science, letters, and arts. Painting, sculpture, and architecture were advanced and

perfected by the consecutive labours of well-employed artists, during the course of almost three hundred years, from Cimabue to Leonardo da Vinci, Fra Bartolomeo and Michael Angelo. Here, a family consisting of mere citizens undertook a task, which ought to have been the business of the Kings of Europe. The Medici family invited to Florence the polite arts, which the Turks were driving out of Greece, their ancient seat. Thus Florence, and soon after all Italy, shone forth with superior glory; but it was from Tuscany that it spread over the other parts of Italy, and became illustrious in a great number of rival schools. All the sciences in general rose there to new life. The Italians honoured them with the name of *Virtue*, as the first Greeks had distinguished them by that of *Wisdom*. And there soon appeared a tendency in all things towards improvement, while France, the Netherlands, and Germany imbibed some rays of the same light.

Now Florence having been the cradle and nursery of infant art, when weak and helpless, had but little space remaining for any of the more exquisite specimens of its power when it was perfected. The consequence was, that

this more advanced state of art fell upon easy terms into the hands of the neighbouring states; and some part of it, we must observe, made the foundation of the beautiful superstructure raised by the Venetian school. A large portion was carried to Rome by Raffaelle and Michael Angelo, under whose great minds it made a rapid progress, as it did also in the Lombard state, in the hands of Giorgione and Titian; and although each branch may be said to bear different fruit, yet all proceeded from the same root.

But I must here remark, that from whatever cause the Fine Arts (as they are vulgarly called) originated, they have attained their highest degree of excellence only in those ages and in those countries, in which the government has united with religion to encourage them by its patronage and protect them by its power. Hence all the ancient statues, those stupendous achievements which we now survey with wonder, were public works dedicated to the purpose of religious worship. Thus nobly urged by a laudable ambition, contending artists were inspired with the most ardent desire to excel each other in works deemed sacred. Those that were destined to become the objects

of adoration, would be judged of by the well-informed and gain their authors an everlasting name. We may add to this the certainty, also, that such exertions of genius would be remunerated with ample reward.

Thus, among the ancients, the arts became engrafted on the government, and were nourished by religion. But when the Pagan mode of worship was exploded from these polished nations, of course this degree of high art, which can exist only by powerful assistance, sunk also with its supporters, and lay long in a state of total oblivion.

After the expiration of this first period of their splendour, the arts for a considerable space of time lay dormant amid the tumults of war, as before observed, and might have thus continued, had not religion, under a new form, again revived them by the policy of the Church of Rome. This hierarchy, after great and perilous struggles, having at length subdued and triumphed over the Heathen system, and in time methodised its own, found leisure to search for all those aids which were best adapted to forward its imposing scheme of government, and the sagacity of its rulers soon directed their attention to the sleeping arts. They perceived

how much use might be made of them towards captivating the vulgar, and enforcing its doctrines by a more powerful charm than even argument itself, by addressing the passions, and placing a most potent engine in politic hands, to aid their grand purpose, as had been done of old. Therefore, the arts were adopted and cherished by the Church with a parent's care. The result was that it procured for them a second era: the like to which perhaps no time will ever offer, when religion and government shall a third time unite to give the arts their support and consequent splendor.

But such an era for the revival of the highest department of art, in this country particularly, is past all shadow of hope; for nothing is more evident than that the Church of Rome alone has been the creator and sole nourisher of the art in its grandest aspect, from whom it has received all its dignity; and it has now been clearly proved for some ages past, how much a moral impossibility it is that this noble art, in its loftiest aims, should ever arrive at any degreee of respectability in a Protestant country, or expect to rise beyond the mechanical excellence of a portrait or the humble baubles for a cabinet. All its struggles are but vain:

as well might we expect to see corn grow on the barren rock, or animal life to be continued without nourishment. Thus foreigners exult in their triumph over us; and because we have not been able, from want of means, to exert our powers, they gladly attribute it to the want of genius. What still adds strength to this degrading imputation thus thrown on the English nation is, that all our pretended connoisseurs join against their country to depress its efforts in art, determined to prefer the most despicable foreign trumpery to the most energetic effort of a native Briton. Except in the department of portraiture, the art of painting in England has been obstructed or disregarded, unless during some happier intervals, when the Goddess of Taste has paid a short visit to the Great. Otherwise, art has been in small estimation, unless the artist was foreign. Our neighbours the French have spoken contemptuously of us without reserve: and the few English who have indisputably excelled were scarcely rewarded with the honest and impartial approbation of their own countrymen.

Far otherwise was it in Italy. No sooner did patronage begin to operate, than genius rose under its fostering hand as by a magic touch,

and brought to light those extraordinary men of genius, Leonardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo Buonarotti in Florence, Giorgione and Titian in the Venetian territory, and Raffaelle in the Roman—men equally eminent, though in different departments of the arts, whose various excellences, had they been united in one person, we should then have seen a perfect artist: but this can never happen, as human powers and human life are too limited for acquirements of such vast extent.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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